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"The Story of our Lives from Year to Year."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A Weekly Journal.

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

VOLUME XVIII.

FROM JUNE 29 TO DECEMBER 7, 1867.

Including No. 427 to No. 450, and the Extra Number for Christmas.

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AND BY MESSRS. CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.

1867.

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Edinburgh Journal.

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WITH WOODS. C. WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.

VOLUME XXIII.

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N^o. 427.]

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MABEL'S PROGRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

BOOK III.

CHAPTER V. AT HAZLEHURST AGAIN.

THE cottage at Hazlehurst was beginning to look bright and pretty, with its orchard trees full of blossom, and the climbing white roses on the house all coming out into bloom, when, one morning towards the end of May, a basket carriage, drawn by a pair of showy little ponies, appeared before the garden gate of Mrs. Saxelby's dwelling.

The vigilant Betty, whose ears had been attracted by the sound of wheels, announced to her mistress that there was a "wicker-work shay" at the door, and that a lady had alighted from it, and was coming up the garden towards the house.

The lady was Miss Penelope Charlewood. She trod so close on Betty's heels, that the latter had scarcely finished her announcement, before Miss Charlewood tapped at the sitting-room door, and requested permission to enter. She was dressed in a plain morning suit of brown holland, and wore a straw hat and a pair of driving-gloves.

"How d'y'e do, Mrs. Saxelby? May I come in?"

Mrs. Saxelby was sitting with an open book before her, and her netting in her hand. She looked up at her visitor with a little start and a flush of surprise.

"Oh pray come in, Miss Charlewood. I am very glad to see you."

"Well, that's more than I deserve, for it is an age since I have been over to Hazlehurst."

"It is more than three weeks, certainly; but you and Clement are the only members of your family who ever do come to see me now, and I have not so many friends that I can afford to quarrel with those who remain to me."

"You mustn't be angry with mamma, Mrs. Saxelby. It isn't because she doesn't like you as much as ever, that she hasn't been out here for so long. But the fact is, she is very much disinclined to go anywhere, and latterly she has been compelled to a good deal of exertion—for *her*—on Augusta's account. I'll tell you all about it by-and-by."

"Oh, I'm not angry with Mrs. Charlewood."

"No. You're never angry with anybody. That is the only vice you have, I believe. But it's a very serious one, let me tell you. People ought to be angry sometimes."

"Shall I begin to practise upon you?" asked Mrs. Saxelby, with a faint smile.

"No; don't do that, for I've come on purpose to ask you and Dooley to take a drive with me this lovely morning. It will do you good. Where *is* Dooley? Mrs. Saxelby, I adore that child for smacking Miss Fluke's face."

"Did you hear of it?"

"Hear of it? Of course I heard of it. Miss Fluke tells everybody. It was lovely of him; lovely. Think of the heroism of that shrimp of a creature doing battle against Miss Fluke's twelve stone! Mind against matter, wasn't it?"

Mrs. Saxelby shook her head with a deprecating air, and left the room to dress herself for the drive, and to send for Dooley out of the kitchen garden, where he was watching the operations of the man who acted as gardener, and driving that somewhat slow-witted individual into great difficulties by his searching questions as to what made the cabbages grow?

Miss Charlewood sat by herself in the little parlour for some five minutes; during which time her thoughts went back to the last day of the music meeting, and the accident to little Corda, with which such a number of subsequent circumstances appeared to be linked. It was from that day that she dated her own perception of Clement's growing fondness for Mabel.

"How many things have happened since then!" thought Miss Charlewood; "and it is not yet a year ago!"

She had learned from her brother that Mabel had rejected him. In answer to some little stinging speech, such as Penelope was wont to utter about friend and foe alike, Clement had told her gravely that neither she nor any of his family need be distressed on the score of a contemplated alliance with such poor people as Mr. Saxelby's widow and step-daughter, for Miss Earnshaw had refused him. Perhaps Clement would not have made this confidence had he not been irritated by his sister's sneer; after he had made it, he walked away in silence, and plainly showed that he thenceforth should decline to discuss the subject. Although, as we know,

Penelope had used her shrewd knowledge of Mabel Earnshaw's character to awaken her pride, and bring about this very result, and although she had even confidently told her father that such a result would inevitably be brought about if she were permitted to manage the matter in her own fashion, yet her first feeling on receiving Clement's confession was one of great resentment against Mabel.

Refuse Clement! Refuse her dear good clever brother Clement! What was the girl dreaming of?

"It turns out luckily, of course; but it's quite outrageous of Mabel, all the same!" exclaimed Miss Charlewood, mentally. But by-and-by she got over that feeling in a great measure. Penelope Charlewood was too clear-headed and clever not to perceive the utter unreasonableness of any such resentment, and her combativeness was presently aroused on behalf of the absent Mabel, by Augusta's frequent attacks upon her former dear friend, until at last Penelope came to be looked upon in the family as the recognised champion of Mrs. Saxelby and her daughter.

"Mabel Earnshaw has refused Clem, papa, so you need not feel any more anxiety about that matter," Miss Charlewood had said to her father.

"Is it possible your brother was such a fool as to ask her to marry him? Good Heavens! what an escape he has had—what an escape we have all had! However, after the step that misguided girl has taken, with the concurrence, too, of her weak mother, of course Clement is entirely cured of his folly."

"Humph!" said Miss Charlewood.

But after that time she did go once or twice to Hazlehurst to see the widow. The first time she told Clement carelessly of her having done so, she was rewarded by the kindest smile she had seen on his face for many a day (for Clement had grown very grave and stern), and by a warm pressure of his hand. "I only go out of aggravation," explained Penny, "and to assert my right of private judgment. I don't choose to let Augusta and Miss Fluke talk me down, on any subject whatever."

Nevertheless her brother's smile had been very sweet to her; and as we all know how soon any one becomes endeared to us, towards whom we have performed a kind action, Penelope began thenceforward to grow quite fond of Mrs. Saxelby, and to take her and Dooley completely under her wing.

"I'm yeady," cried Dooley, appearing at the sitting-room door. "I saw de ponies. I like 'em. May I dive?"

"We'll see about that, Dooley. Are you ready, Mrs. Saxelby? Please to get in that side. Betty, get a footstool for Master Julian to sit on in front of us. That's it. You can go home now, Jackson. Mr. Clement will meet me and drive me back. Give them their heads. Go along, Jack and Jill, like a pair of beauties as you are."

And the spirited little beasts rattled off

briskly with their light load. "You're not afraid to trust yourself with me, Mrs. Saxelby? I'm a pretty fair whip, and the ponies are perfectly steady."

"Oh no, I'm not at all afraid on the country roads. I—I don't much like a lady's driving in town."

"I thought it would be so much nicer to get rid of the servant. One can't talk with a groom's ear within three inches of your head. So I brought this little trap and the ponies, which I can manage by myself."

"It is very pleasant, indeed," said Mrs. Saxelby, leaning back in the carriage.

The day was delicious, the country all bursting into fresh green, and the rapid easy motion of the vehicle was exhilarating. A delicate colour came into Mrs. Saxelby's pale cheek, and her eyes grew bright under these combined pleasant influences.

"I have some news to give you, Mrs. Saxelby," said Penelope, when they had proceeded a little distance.

"Some news?"

"Yes. Augusta is going to be married."

"Really? I am very glad to hear it, and I hope she will be happy."

"Oh, I dare say she will be as happy as one can expect," rejoined Penelope, rubbing the handle of the driving-whip across her chin, with a little air of vexation. "There will always be troubles, of course. Somebody is sure to have a handsomer gown than she has, or a newer-fashioned bonnet. These things must happen sometimes."

"Do you like your future brother-in-law?"

"No, I don't. But that's of very little consequence. He has good points. I think he won't make Gussy a bad husband, because her peculiarities won't worry him as they would some men. He's as placid as a sheep—and nearly as silly. But he comes of a good family, and is a gentleman in his ways, and will have plenty of money some day."

"I suppose he does not belong to Hammerham?"

"No; his family are Irish people."

"Irish?"

"Yes; all beginning with capital O's for generations back. Which is an unspeakable comfort. His name is Dawson. The Reverend Malachi Dawson."

"A clergyman?"

"To be sure. Augusta would never have married any but a parson. And he's horribly low church too, which I detest. He has just got a living in the neighbourhood of Eastfield. A charming house and grounds, I believe. And the marriage is to take place soon. The day is not fixed, but I believe it will be at the beginning of July."

There was a little pause, and then Julian observed in an abstracted manner, and as a general proposition not especially applicable to the present circumstances, that "Dack and Dill" were "pitty," and that he was not "frightened of 'em."

"That means, that you want to drive; eh, Dooley?" said Miss Charlewood.

"Es," answered Dooley, honestly.

"Oh, pray be careful; don't give him the reins!" cried his mother.

"Never fear, Mrs. Saxelby. Dooley shall stand here at my knee, and he shall hold one bit of the reins, and I'll hold the other, and we'll drive together. So."

This arrangement, though not quite up to the height of that ideal happiness, driving the ponies "all by himself," was yet very delightful to Dooley, who wisely made the best of the circumstances.

"You can understand, Mrs. Saxelby, that mamma has been a good deal occupied, when I tell you that, besides Mr. Dawson, we have had his mother and cousin staying at the manor for the last fortnight."

"Indeed?"

Yes; and we have had to go about with them a good deal. The cousin, Miss O'Brien, is a great horsewoman—like most Irishwomen, I believe—and Clem has been her cavalier, and shown her the neighbourhood."

"Indeed?"

Mrs. Saxelby's voice was the least bit constrained, and she drew her shawl round her shoulders with a suppressed sigh.

"You're not cold, Mrs. Saxelby?"

"No, not cold. But I believe there is a touch of east in the wind; and a cloud passed across the sun; and—and—it is not quite as pleasant as it was."

"We will turn and take the Higsworth Park road home, if you like. Steady, Jill, steady, pet; that's it, go along, beauties."

"Do 'long, booties!" echoed Dooley.

"What was I saying? Oh yes. About Miss O'Brien. She is charmed with the rides and drives about here; and she told me, with her piquant little taste of a brogue, that she was quite astonished to find anything fresh and green within twenty miles of Hammerham; for that she had imagined it to be darkened with a perpetual cloud of smoke, and surrounded by a sort of wizard's circle of cinders for miles and miles."

"Is she—I suppose—she is handsome?"

"She is an exceedingly fine girl, and better than handsome. I think she has the brightest and most expressive face I ever saw, and she is as clever as she can be. I wish her cousin Malachi had half her brains! Clement is delighted to find that she will listen to his holding forth on his pet hobby—Gandry and Charlewood, and all their wonderful enterprises in the four quarters of the globe—for any length of time. And what's more, she remembers what he tells her. She astonished papa at dinner yesterday, by correcting him about the number of miles already laid down, of the new South American Railway."

"She must be very clever," said Mrs. Saxelby, faintly.

"She is. She really is. But, *entre nous*, I'm not sure that her memory would have been

quite so accurate, if the information had been imparted by papa instead of Clem. However, that's no business of ours, is it?"

"Oh no," rejoined Mrs. Saxelby, in a queer little voice that didn't seem to belong to her; and then she relapsed into a silence that was unbroken by either until they came within sight of the widow's cottage at Hazlehurst.

"Dere's Mr. Tarlewood!" shouted Dooley.

"Mr. Tarlewood, I've been diving!"

"You'll dive again, head-foremost out of the carriage, if you don't keep still, Dooley," said Penelope. "Now, see here. For just this last little bit, I'll give you the reins into your own hands, all by yourself. Hold them very steady. Now, bring us up to the gate in style."

Clement Charlewood was waiting at the little garden gate, and came forward to help his sister and Mrs. Saxelby out of the carriage.

"I hope you have had a pleasant drive, Mrs. Saxelby," said Clement.

He had lifted out Dooley in his arms, and was stroking the little fellow's curls from his forehead as he held him. Something came up into Mrs. Saxelby's throat and gave her a choking sensation that made her eyes fill with tears.

"Thank you; a charming drive. I—I hear—dear me, I don't know what this can be in my throat—I hear that I have to congratulate Augusta."

"Thank you. Yes, we are to lose her very soon; but my mother will have her comparatively near at hand, after all. It is scarcely like a separation."

"Mrs. Charlewood is fortunate. I have to be parted from my Mabel, and without the comfort of confiding her to a husband's protecting love."

Mrs. Saxelby let her tears brim over and run down her cheeks, without saying anything more of the choking sensation in her throat.

Dooley struggled down out of Clement's arms, and, running to his mother, took her hand.

"Tibby will tum back, mamma," said he, manfully. "I *seer* she will tum back. 'Ces Tibby said so."

"Good-bye, Mrs. Saxelby," said Penelope. "I won't get out, thank you; we must be driving homewards. If you'll let me, I will come again before long, and give Dooley another lesson in driving."

Penelope did not appear to see Mrs. Saxelby's tears. She never required any softness of sympathy from others, and never expressed any to others. But perhaps her feigned unconsciousness was real kindness.

The widow stood inside the garden gate and watched the vehicle as it rolled swiftly away along the level road. Then she went into her little sitting-room—which somehow looked very poor and threadbare to her eyes under the bright sunlight—and, taking Dooley on her knee, held the child's soft cheek to her breast, and cried until his yellow curls were all wet

and matted with her tears. The loving docile little fellow sat very still with his arms round his mother's neck, only offering from time to time his great comfort and panacea for all ills:

"Tibby will tum back, mamma; I *soor* Tibby will tum back."

CHAPTER VI. MACBETH AT KILCLARE.

MONDAY night came; the first night of the season at Kilclare. The establishment of Mrs. Bridget Bonny was in a flutter of expectation and excitement. On the first night of the season, Teddy Molloy, Biddy's step-son, always gave his two apprentices leave to go to the play, and he and his wife usually went into the pit themselves; in fact, the whole household turned out, with the exception of old Joe Bonny and the foreman: who was a Methodist, and held theatres to be sinful. The performance commenced at seven, so Mrs. Walton and Mabel set off for the theatre at a little before six, preceded by Pat Doyle, the washerwoman's son, who was engaged to carry a basket containing their stage dresses to and from the theatre every evening for the weekly stipend of one shilling.

Mabel had no more onerous task to perform on this first evening than to appear as a witch and join in the choruses. She was therefore free from responsibility, and could observe everything around her with tolerable calmness. Nevertheless, she felt a thrill of excitement and nervousness when, from the dressing-room which she and her aunt shared with old Mrs. Darling, she heard the sudden rush of footsteps and the babel of voices that followed the opening of the gallery door. The stairs leading up to the gallery passed close to the wall of Mabel's dressing-room, and she felt them shake beneath the clatter of hurrying feet, and heard the noisy greetings and shouts of that portion of the audience known in theatrical parlance as the "gods."

"I think there will be a good house," said Mrs. Darling, in her measured accents.

Mrs. Darling was to play one of the three weird sisters, and was busily engaged in covering her fat placid countenance with a perfect network of black lines: which may have looked haggard and awful at a distance, but which, viewed near, gave her face the appearance of a railway map.

"I'm sure I hope so," said Mrs. Walton. "I think the business is likely to be good on the whole. This was always one of the best theatrical towns in Ireland for its size."

"Half hour, ladies!" cried a high shrill voice outside the door.

"What is it? What does he say, aunt?" asked Mabel, combing out her long thick hair, which she was to wear loose and dishevelled about her shoulders; that being the indispensable coiffure for a witch in the days of King Duncan.

"That's the call-boy, Mabel. He is calling the half hour; that is to say, you have still thirty minutes before the overture begins."

"Miss Bell is completely new to things theatrical, I see," said Mrs. Darling, affixing two long matted elf-locks of grey hair to the nondescript turban which she was about to put on her head; having first carefully combed back her own smooth light hair, and fastened it up out of sight.

"Well, yes; in a measure she is new to them. She lived for some years in my family. But that was when she was a child, and I never let the children be very much in the theatre."

"Your son," said Mrs. Darling, grandly, "is, I am pleased to hear, considered one of the most rising scene-painters of the day. He has won golden opinions from all sorts of people, Mrs. Walton."

"I am very glad to hear you say so. Jack is ambitious, for all his careless light-hearted manner."

"He may justly be so. Many of our first artists have sprung from the theatrical painting-room. David Cox, Roberts——"

"Ten minutes, ladies!"

"Dear me, I must hasten. I did not think it was so late."

Mrs. Darling continued her toilet somewhat more quickly than before, but with a sort of methodical majesty that never deserted her.

As soon as Mabel was dressed—and perhaps some of my readers may like to know that the costume of a Scottish witch in that remote period was supposed to be accurately represented by a clean white petticoat, a pair of neat black leather shoes, a brown bedgown, green and blue tartan cloak, and flowing hair—she accompanied her aunt into the green-room. It was lighted by a couple of gas-burners fixed on each side of the chimney-piece. Besides the spears and banners there was now a pile of round pasteboard shields covered with silver paper, and there were three wooden props—of the kind used in suburban gardens to sustain clothes-lines—leaning up in a corner, and intended for the use of the three principal witches. The only person in the room when Mabel and her aunt entered it, was Mr. Shaw. He was transformed, by means of a flowing white wig and beard, into a very venerable-looking King Duncan, and was walking up and down repeating his part in short jerky sentences. Presently came in, various other members of the company. Mr. Moffatt dressed as Macduff, and looking very fierce about the head, and very mild about the legs. Mr. Copestake as Banquo, with a false black beard, like the curly wig of a wax doll, and very pink cotton stockings. Miss Lydia St. Aubert, dignified and imposing in the long purple robes of Lady Macbeth, and with a square of white cashmere bound on her head by a golden circlet.

It was all poor enough, and had a large element of the absurd in it, which Mabel was fully alive to, but yet there *was* a certain glamour of romance over the shabby place and the

third-rate players. There *was* a certain poetry, and an escape from the hard actualities, in the very fact of having to utter such words as those of Shakespeare's tragedy of Macbeth, and in the attempt to body forth, however inadequately, those wondrous creatures of the poet's imagination. And let it be remembered that, inferior as were most of the performers to the height of the task assigned to them, there were probably few, if any, persons even among the better portion of the audience, capable of reading and expounding three consecutive lines of the play as intelligently as the great majority of those provincial players. The very quaintness of the phraseology which would have rendered many passages obscure to the general reader, was, by habit and tradition, clear and familiar to the actors, and acquired force and meaning to many ears for the first time, being interpreted by their lips.

"Overture, ladies! Overture, gentlemen!" bawled the call-boy—who was a son of Nix, the versatile property-man, and was himself attired in a kilt and a tartan scarf, ready to personate Fleance. Presently, with a crashing preliminary chord, the orchestra struck up a medley of national airs. *Not* Scotch tunes, but Irish melodies. And the selection terminated with an air of local celebrity, called Jerry the Buck, to whose marked rhythm the stamping feet of the "gods" kept accurate time.

"Couldn't get on in Kilclare without Jerry the Buck," said Mr. Moffatt. "The gallery boys expect it to be played at least once every evening throughout the season."

Mabel had already seen little Corda Trescott. Mrs. Walton had asked the child to spend Sunday with them, and had taken her to church, and for a long country walk in the evening, and had sent her home full of delight and gratitude. Her joy at meeting Mabel again, knew no bounds.

The little creature was to personate that one of the apparitions which "wears upon his baby brow the round and top of sovereignty," and she came into the green-room with her gold-brown curls waving round her delicate face, and crept up close to Mabel's side in shy silence. Cordelia Trescott was one of those beings, the natural refinement of whose aspect it is impossible to vulgarise by any outward circumstances. Dress her as you would, surround her with what coarse or absurd setting you might, she shone out pure and delicate as a lily, and could no more be made to look vulgar than the flower itself can.

"Well, Corda, are you going to sing in the choruses? I have never yet heard your voice, you know," said Mabel.

"Yes, Miss Mabel. I know all the music quite correctly, papa says."

Presently, a violent shaking administered by the prompter to the sheet of iron hanging over his head announced the thunder with which the awful tragedy begins; and Nix, the indispensable, lightened from a tin tray at the wing,

with weird effect. The house was full, and the audience in high good humour. All the old well-known favourites—among whom Miss Lydia St. Aubert was perhaps the chief—were received with enthusiastic applause, and the new comers were greeted encouragingly. When Nix put his head inside the green-room door, and said: "All the witches, please. Everybody-y-y!" Mabel trembled with excitement. She took Corda's hand and followed Mrs. Walton on to the stage, to the quaint strains of old Matthew Locke's music—music more appropriate, perhaps, to the notion of a witch entertained by his Majesty King James the First, than to those wild grim conceptions of the poet's brain, who met Macbeth upon the blasted heath, and subtly tempted him with spoken suggestions of his own unuttered desires.

The gas was turned down very low (according to immemorial usage in the witches' scenes), and when Mabel fairly found herself first on the stage, the front of the house seemed to her unaccustomed eyes like some cave or gulf seen in a dream, and peopled with shadowy pale faces surging out of the darkness. After a second or two, she was able to make out the shape of the theatre, the divisions of the boxes, and the sloping crowd of heads that filled the gallery to the ceiling. Then how thankful did she feel to be one of an undistinguished throng, and to know herself an insignificant and irresponsible member of it! "No one will look at me!" thought Mabel, with a sigh of relief. And yet she was mistaken in so thinking. The theatrical public of Kilclare was limited in numbers, and strongly interested in each individual member of Mr. Moffatt's company. They partook, indeed, very much of the sort of spirit that any one who has conversed with actors of the old school may have heard attributed to the players of Bath and York some forty years ago. Centralisation—that modern offspring of steam and the electric telegraph—has affected, not only kings and kaisers, potentates and princelings, but the mimic monarchs of the stage. The days are over when it was possible to achieve and retain a high professional reputation as an actor, without having appeared on the metropolitan boards. Still, here and there, in out-of-the-way nooks and corners of the kingdom, somewhat of the old local feeling remains; and it was so in the good town of Kilclare.

Teddy Molloy, seated in the centre of the pit, had been dispensing to his immediate neighbours such scraps of information with regard to his step-mother's lodgers, as he thought fit to impart; and consequently it was very soon known to a large number of the audience that "the purty girl with the thick dark hair, and the nate little fut and ankle," was a niece of their old and respected favourite, Mrs. Walton. Rumours presently began to circulate that she had been a great heiress, had lost all her property, and was obliged to take to the stage to support herself and her family: which rumours

caused much interest in "Miss M. A. Bell," and prepared the Kilclare critics to receive her efforts with considerable favour, whenever she should essay a part. For it is a singular fact that while few people would submit to have their shoes spoiled, or their clothes cut awry, by inexperienced amateur shoemakers and tailors, on the plea that those artisans had never studied shoemaking or tailoring, yet in things theatrical the public—and the public of bigger places than little Kilclare—often seems as willing to welcome and pay for 'prentice work as for skilled labour.

Mabel, however, unconscious of the notice she was attracting, went through her part of the music with conscientious attention to the instructions of Mr. Trescott. She also made the useful discovery that her arms and legs and hands, which might be trusted to fall into easy and graceful postures in private life without any special thought on her part, became awkward and unmanageable on the boards of the stage; and that, as her aunt, quoting from stores of professional tradition and experience, had told her, it absolutely required considerable skill and attention to learn to stand still with anything like ease or nature.

Mabel had begun her apprenticeship.

The tragedy went off with brilliant success. Mr. Wilfred J. Percival, who made his debut in Kilclare on the occasion, was received with signal favour. And all the critics (*before the curtain*) agreed that if his readings were occasionally obscure, and his pronunciation somewhat too transatlantic, he yet made up for all short-comings by the splendour of his costumes, the power of his voice, and the extraordinary vigour and energy of his final combat with Macduff. Indeed, the contrast between his tall figure and muscular wielding of the claymore, and poor Mr. Moffatt's diminutive form and feeble swordsmanship, may be said to have almost shed a new and radiant light upon the moral of the play; for it was clear that nothing but the most triumphant virtue on the one side, and the most conscience-stricken villany on the other, could have given thethane of Fife the smallest chance in the conflict. To enable such a Macduff to vanquish such a Macbeth, the former must have a very good cause indeed!

The performances terminated with a farce, in which Mrs. Walton performed a comic servant-girl, to the intense delight of the audience, and in which the sententious low comedian received what the Kilclare Courier called next morning, "an ovation." And then the audience poured noisily out of the little playhouse, and trooped away, scattering streams of talk and laughter through the quiet streets of the town; and then the lights were put out in the front of the theatre, the doors closed with a clang that echoed through the empty house; stage dresses were changed for street dresses, stage paint was washed off, stage wigs were removed; and Mabel, with Jack and Mrs. Walton, walked home through the sweet May

night, discussing the events of the evening, in very good humour with themselves and with each other.

VERY OLD NEWS.

It may not be universally known—but I have it from a gentleman on whose word much reliance may be placed—one Suetonius—that the first chief editor of the first daily paper was no less a person than Julius Caesar. My friend does not indeed affirm that Julius opened an office in the aristocratic precinct of Summa Velia (Mount Palatine), or in the more commercial regions of Janus Summus and Infimus (Upper and Lower Bankers' streets), still less that he was actuated by any mercenary motives in making the first recorded plunge into journalism, and *that* at a period of his not inactive life when consular duties must have absorbed much of his time and attention. True it is that a man in his position, with his acknowledged capacity of doing three things at a time, and all to perfection, might have thrown in an editorship, and made a good thing of it. Such, however, was not his aim. We shall presently see what *was*.

Perhaps the very earliest suspicion of a regular paper was a certain serial, published under the supervision of the Roman priesthood, and limited to two classes of information—a register of births and deaths, and notices of the assumption of the "toga virilis" (dress of manhood), on which interesting occasions considerable fees became payable into the respective treasuries of the temples dedicated to Juno, Lucina, Venus, and Juventas. A kindred tax, having reference especially to the first knickerbockers, might be introduced in modern times, with the double advantage of curbing the growing passion for that hideous garment, and contributing handsomely to the Exchequer.

The Emperor Augustus, for some unascertained reason, forbade the publication of the first description of an announcement, but continued the latter.

Stephen Pighius, of the low countries, who, in 1599, published Annals of the Magistrates and Provinces under the Romans, presents us with some specimens of these early news-sheets, adding that they were given to him by James Susius, who found them among the papers of Ludovicus Vives. Further authentication would be superfluous, especially when it is mentioned that Dodwell, quoting them in his Camdenian lectures, together with some later examples (A.V.C. 691), states that he received them from a friend, Adrian Beverland, who had them from Mr. Isaac Vossius, canon of Windsor, who transcribed them from a parcel of inscriptions prepared by a gentleman named Petavius (probably Denis Pétau, the Jesuit) for the press.

That certain other registers were in existence before Caesar started his Daily News may be gathered from a remark in one of Cicero's ora-

tions (pro Syll.), in which he styles them "tabulæ publicæ." These, it is likely, were a kind of parliamentary report, having reference, almost exclusively, to the proceedings of the senate: which numerous, grave, and regular body could never have carried on their vast and various business without some such registry.

"Divus" Julius knew, as well as any man, that a purely parliamentary journal, published "under authority," and, by consequence, suppressing everything the public most desired to know, would be hardly satisfactory to the latter. On the other hand, it is undeniably repugnant to the genius of an absolute government that its councils should be publicly revealed. He might have furthermore reflected that the amusing topics supplied by the casual occurrences of a great city are so far from harmful, under such a constitution, that they rather serve to draw away the minds of the people from a too anxious scrutiny of state affairs.

In pursuance of this view, therefore, immortal Cæsar decreed the establishment of a publication which should combine instruction with amusement, and detail at once the acts of the people and their rulers. Perhaps by this single act may the hero be said to have dealt a fatal blow at the aristocratic tendencies of Rome.

Great was the success of the imperial Daily News. (Cæsar called it "Acta Diurna.") Its pages were quoted by the Roman historians, and appealed to by orators as an authority it would be presumption to call in question. The appearance of the oracle, at any distance from the city, was a time of jubilee. Tacitus tells us (*Annal.* lib. 16) that it was watched for with intense eagerness by the army, and the provincial population generally. And no wonder; for, in addition to the graver doings of government, Cæsar's Daily News furnished its readers with all the noteworthy occurrences of the seven-hilled city, its trials, punishments, elections, buildings, sacrifices, prodigies, deaths, accidents, offences, &c. Cæsar's staff of reporters ("actuarii") were active and intelligent men. We may be pretty sure that the colossal gooseberry, grown last year in the garden of Mr. Bubinch, at Hemel Hempstead, had its prototype in that of Publius Sergius Loquens at Ostia. An additional guarantee of authenticity was derived from the fact that the chief magistrates acted as Cæsar's sub-editors, and assumed the responsibility of every item of intelligence that was suffered to appear.

The daily issue (there were no evening or second editions) was, for certain cogent reasons, not equal to that of the journals of our day. The "Acta Diurna" was not in a position to proclaim, with pardonable exultation, that its circulation on—say the fourth of the nones of April—exceeded one hundred and seventeen thousand! It would perhaps be an error on the complimentary side to estimate the circulation of Cæsar's Daily News at from fifteen to twenty copies. Of these, one was carefully laid up, with other records, in the Hall of Liberty.

The rest, after going the round of the city, found their way into the hands of the hungry news-seekers in the provinces, where they circulated with a rapidity that, even in those days, left few Romans of education and position long in ignorance of what was passing in the metropolis of the world.

We learn, from Cicero's epistles, that some small journal, of sporting tendencies, was already existing in Rome. "Chrestus's Compilation" seems to have ministered to the fast young Romans the pabulum furnished by "Bell" to the "gentlemen sportsmen" of our own age.

Cicero's reference to this publication is the reverse of respectful. While governor of Cilicia, he had engaged his friend Cælius to supply him with the news of Rome. Cælius, either thinking that his friend's mind needed relaxation, or, perhaps, simply desirous of executing his task as completely as possible, enclosed, in his first letter, a kind of journal of occurrences in the city, but of so trivial a character that Cicero, much disgusted, hastily responds:

"Quid? tu me hoc," &c. "What! do you think that I left it in charge with you to bother me with accounts of the matches of gladiators, adjournments of courts, and such-like articles, of which, even when I am in town, nobody ventures to speak to me? From you, O Cælius, I expect a political sketch of the state of the commonwealth—not a Chrestus's newspaper!" (*Epist. Fam. lib. 2.*)

The following extracts, as close as possible to the originals, may give an idea of the form and manner of these announcements:

"A.U.C. 586, 5th of the kalends of April. The Fæces with Emilius the consul.

"The consul, crowned with laurel, sacrificed at the temple of Apollo. The senate assembled at the Curia Hostilia, about the eighth hour, and a decree passed that pretors should give sentence according to the edicts, which were of perpetual validity."

(Imitated by the fashionable prints of two thousand years later:

"His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, attended by Sir William Knollys, rode on horseback, and presided at a meeting of the Belgian reception committee.

"The House of Lords assembled at five o'clock, and, ten minutes later, adjourned for a fortnight.")

"Fourth of the kalends of April. Fæces with Licinius, the consul.

"It thundered." (One might have imagined this information superfluous; but the proceedings of Jupiter "Tonans" were, perhaps, habitually chronicled.) "This day, Marcus Scapula was accused of an act of violence, before Caius Babius, prætor. Fifteen of the judges were for condemning him, and thirty-three for adjourning the case."

(Scapula could not complain of a thin bench, nor, had "Babius" been all his name implies, could he have required more aid in the discharge of his official functions.)

"Third of the kalends of April. Fasces with Emilius. It rained stones on Mount Veientine." (Ahem!) "A fray happened in a tavern, near the Alban Mount, in which the keeper of the 'Hog in Armour' was dangerously wounded.

"The Ædile, Tertinius, fined the butchers for selling meat which had not been inspected by the overseers of the market. The fine is to be appropriated to build a chapel to the temple of the Goddess Tellus.

"Posthumus, the tribune, sent his beadle to the consul, that he should not convene the senate on that day; but the tribune, Decimus, putting in his veto, the affair went no further." (Disgust of Posthumus!)

"Pridie kal. April. Fasces with Licinius. The Latin festivals were celebrated. A sacrifice performed on the Alban Mount, and a dole of raw flesh distributed to the people.

"A fire happened on Mount Cœlius. Two trisulæ" (houses of the rich, standing apart) "and five dwellings were burned to the ground, and four damaged.

"Demiphon, the famous pirate, who was taken by Licinius Nerva, a provincial lieutenant, was sacrificed.

"The red standard was displayed at the capitol, and the consuls obliged the youths who were enlisted for the Macedonian war to make a new oath in the Campus Martius."

"Kal. Apr.

"Paulus, the consul, and Cn. Octavius, the prætor, set out for Macedonia, in the habits of war.

"The funeral of Marcia was performed, with greater pomp of images than attendance of mourners." (An ill-natured remark, and one we should have hesitated to disinter, but for the very trifling nature of the probability that it should wound the feelings of Marcia's surviving friends.)

"The Pontifex, Sempronius, proclaimed the Megaliskian plays, in honour of Cybele."

"Fourth of the nones of April.

"A ver sacrum" (a vow to sacrifice an ox or sheep, from between the kalends of March and the pridie kalends of June) "was vowed, pursuant to the opinion of the College of Priests. Presents were made to the ambassadors of the Etolians. Eleusius, the prætor, set out for Sicily.

"An entertainment was given to the people by Marcia's sons, at their mother's funeral.

"A stage-play was acted this day, being sacred to Cybele."

"Third of the nones of April.

"Popilius Lenas, C. Decimus, and C. Hostilius were sent ambassadors to the kings of Syria and Egypt, in order to accommodate the differences about which they are now at war. Early in the morning they went up, with a great attendance of clients and relations, to offer a sacrifice and libations at the temple of Castor and Pollux before they began their journey."

The following extracts belong to a series of the same publication, when about one hundred

and twenty years old. These are fuller and more entertaining than the former; the art of journalism having progressed as rapidly as everything else under imperial Rome. But we must be content with a few short examples:

"Syllanus and Muræna, consuls. Fasces with Muræna. Third of the ides of March.

"Muræna sacrificed early in the morning at the temple of Castor and Pollux, and afterwards assembled the senate in Pompey's senate-house."

"Fifth of the kalends of September. M. Tullius Cicero pleaded in defence of Cornelius Sylla, accused of being concerned in Catiline's conspiracy, and gained his cause by a majority of five judges. The tribunes of the treasury were against the defendant." [The judicial power, at this time, was, by the Aurelian law, divided between the senatorial and equestrian orders and the treasury tribunes, who were plebeians.]

"One of the prætors advertised by an edict that he should put off his sittings for five days, on account of his daughter's marriage.

"A report was brought to Tertinius, the prætor, while trying causes, that his son was dead. This was contrived by the friends of Copponius (who was accused of poisoning), that the prætor might adjourn the court; but the magistrate, having discovered the falsehood of the story, returned to his tribunal." [The prætor was one of the chief magistrates, whose office was first instituted A.U.C. 388, and received its name, a præundo—going before. At Rome the prætors appeared with much pomp. Two lictors preceded them; they wore the prætexta; they sat in curule chairs, and appeared in public on white horses.]

"Fourth of the kalends of September.

"The funeral of Metella Pia, vestal, was celebrated. She was buried in the sepulchre of her ancestors, in the Aurelian road."

This office, the vestals', dates, it will be remembered, from the very commencement of the Roman empire, the mother of Romulus being a vestal. It was required that they should be of good family, and without blemish or deformity in any part of the body. For thirty years they were to remain in the greatest continence, the first ten years being spent in learning the duties of the order, the second ten in discharging them with sanctity, the last, in instructing such as had entered the novitiate. Their employment was to watch and feed the sacred fire, kept perpetually burning in the temple of Vesta, the accidental extinction of which was held to be the forerunner of some great calamity to the state. Severe punishment awaited the culpable custodian. She was condemned to the punishment of slaves, and, covered only with a thin veil, underwent the scourge at the hands of the pontiff.

A more terrible penalty awaited the vestal who violated her vows of chastity. Nay, so strictly were these vows interpreted, that the mere probability of yielding to temptation was deemed sufficient. A vestal was condemned to

death for having owned that, but for the pleasant prospect of a subsequent marriage, she would prefer to die. ("Moriar, nisi nubere dulce est.")

Roman journals, such as have come down to us, give no details of these awful executions. With an ominous reserve, it is merely announced that the culprit "suffered." Criminal as she was, the dignity and sacredness of her office clung about her to the last; and the unhappy creature went to her lingering death with the pomp and solemnity that might befit a royal funeral. But what followed?

"There is," writes Plutarch, "near the Colline gate, a small, deep cavern, the descent to which is by an orifice capable of admitting a human body. Within this, are placed a small couch, a lighted lamp, a loaf of bread, a cruse of water, a phial of oil, and a bowl of milk, in order that religion may not be offended in permitting to die of hunger an individual consecrated with ceremonies so august and holy."

Sad and mournful was the day in Rome that witnessed one of these terrible processions winding, in awful silence, through the crowded ways—the people standing aloof, with eyes nailed upon the moving tomb (a litter so constructed as not only to conceal, but almost to stifle the cries of the miserable occupant), which passed toward that darker tomb beside the Colline gate.

Arrived there, the lictors removed the veils and shutters, and the high priest—after murmuring mysterious prayers, never heard but by his order—drew forth the wretched criminal, and guided her shuddering feet to the ladder, down which she had to descend into her living grave. The ladder was then withdrawn, and the aperture closed, and covered with earth in such a manner as to leave no mound or trace; this, to signify that she who had been left beneath was alike unworthy to be reckoned among the living and the dead.

The vestals were abolished, and the fire of Vesta extinguished, by Theodosius the Great.

From the last quoted paper—4th kal. Sept.—we moreover learn that the censors made a bargain that the temple of Aius Locutius (a celestial gentleman whose supernatural voice warned the Romans of the approach of the Gauls, in the time of Camillus) should be repaired for twenty-five sesterces (about four and twopence): a thrifty bargain by the censors, and well deserving a place in the *Acta Diurna*.

Finally, we learn that Q. Hortensius harangued the people "about the censorship and the Allobrogian war," two topics so far asunder as to engender a suspicion that Q. Hortensius, having got the public by the ear, did not know how to relinquish his hold. And, last of all, advice arrived from Etruria, that some of the late conspirators had begun a tumult, headed by Lucius Sergius.

Now this is a rather curious paragraph. It would seem, as a matter of course, to apply to the conspiracy of Lucius Sergius Catiline,

which was hatched in Etruria. But Catiline's conspiracy had been completely quashed before this date, a fact, of course, well known to the conductors of the *Acta Diurna*. It probably meant that disturbances had been renewed by certain of the conspirators who had hitherto escaped detection. But Lucius Sergius, stated to be "at their head," was as dead as Guy Fawkes.

In examining these old-world records, we arrive at the conclusion that if, on the one hand, we find the same conciseness, clearness, and simplicity which distinguished the inscriptions upon the medals and public monuments of the ancients, they are, on the other, deficient in that sprightly humour, and those happy turns of expression, which give charm to modern diurnal composition.

In one material ornament of style our Roman gazettes were woefully deficient. They never hint or mystify. If it rained stones on Mount Veientine, they simply record the shower. If an ox or an ass spoke, they record, as tersely as possible, the observations offered by that animal. If "cultivate the gods" was found legibly written on a pig's interior, the exhortation was gravely published for what it was worth. They never conclude with such hints as "this matter excites the profoundest speculation," or "interest hourly increasing," "no one can foresee the result," &c. &c. Far less do they commence with such incertitudes as "we hear," "we are credibly informed," "it is widely whispered."

The ingenious excuse for a downright fabrication, "it wants confirmation," seems to have been wholly unknown to those plain dealers and speakers, nor do they seem to have been at all awake to the advantage of popping in an occasional falsehood one day, in order to revive it in the public mind by a flat contradiction on the next. There is no exaggeration, no compliment. The prætor's very daughter is married, and we are left in darkness as to the young lady's beauty, merit, dower. We know simply that her sire postponed his "sittings" for five days (the act of a doting father) in order that the nuptial festivities should have full swing.

There is one more characteristic of these journals which should not escape attention: their constant reference to religious ceremonies. Scarcely a day passes without some sacrifice or festival to propitiate the gods, and implore their blessing upon the arms and the councils of the State. Like the immortal narratives of the Roman historians, from Livy to Marcellinus, they abound with recitals of the performance of religious duties, while, at the same time, they recount the most absurd and ridiculous prodigies with all the gravity due to historic truth.

With this latter exception, the *Acta Diurna*, meagre as its details were, was a thoroughly honest and reliable publication. In illustration of every description of historical fact, it would have been of inestimable value to the historian

and man of letters; and the loss of the complete series has left a void which the most painstaking research can never fill.

THE GOOD SHIP CHICHESTER.

THE Queen's birthday on board a Queen's ship. All hands aloft. The captain and ship's officers shouting their commands from the deck, the yards manned, and the rigging swarming with the active sailor lads who form the crew. After one or two preliminary signals, the word for "Three cheers for the Queen" is given, and these and the conventional "one cheer more" are delivered with true nautical heartiness. Another, and another wandering and undisciplined cheer, follow; for the experiment is a new one, and the lithe figures above us are manning yards, and keeping the Queen's birthday together for the first time. During the same anniversary last year most of them were in the streets. Not walking in them occasionally at holiday seasons, but living there entirely. That "stony-hearted step-mother," the London pavement, is the only relative many of them have ever known; and foul words and deeds, evil speaking, lying, begging, and stealing, are the moral lessons she has taught.

We are on board the good ship Chichester, now moored off Greenhithe, and the ninety-five merry boys, who are by this time racing down to the deck again, were all found destitute and friendless, were all traversing the road to ruin with dire rapidity, and are all being trained for a useful and honourable life with complete success. The Chichester was built for a government frigate, and, after lying uselessly in ordinary for many years, was lent by the Lords of the Admiralty a few months ago to her present occupants. A strange supper-party at the Boys' Refuge in Queen-street, Lincoln's Inn-fields, where the Earl of Shaftesbury presided over as motley a crew of boy-guests as could well be found—ragged dirty guests who had been prevailed on to come in from door-steps, dry archways, street corners, twopenny lodging-houses and casual wards, and a meeting at Willis's Rooms, where some of the same boys, cleansed and clothed, were exhibited—such have been the preliminaries to which the scene before us is due. The supper-party brought the existence of these lads prominently before the public, the meeting developed a distinct scheme for their reclamation, and the ship and its discipline show the practical result of both. Converting incipient felons into truthful and God-fearing citizens is, in a word, the business carried on here; and the outward signs of this business are as palpable as its moral effects. Let us take the photograph presented to me at the public meeting I have named, and compare the portraits it contains with the faces of the originals around us. Recognition is all but impossible. Twelve months of decent life, of regular hours, wholesome living and instruction, have not merely humanised expressions,

but altered features. Most of us have suffered so much and so severely from the photographer, that the comparison of living smiling faces with the vicious sullen parodies in our hands is not conclusive in itself. Even in public life, who cannot quote men of established goodness and piety whose lineaments as photographed would justify their conviction at the Old Bailey, while in the portraits of Mr. Calcraft, and in one of the most atrocious murderers he executed, we seem to see mild benignity and staid benevolence incarnate. But on board the Chichester I recognise boys whom I saw in the flesh—but much less of it—soon after they were caught, and the change is marvellous. There is fully as much difference between some of these as they appear now, and as I saw them last, as between the worst of photographs and its original; and I know no more forcible mode of expressing disresemblance. Frames have filled out, scowls have disappeared, premature lines and wrinkles have been smoothed away, but, above all, the furtive sneaking "hunted" glance which was so painful to see, is supplanted by an open honest gaze which meets yours unfalteringly, and which speaks volumes for its owner's honesty. Nothing, however, would make them handsome boys. Degeneracy of race is marked in their low and narrow foreheads, heavy jowls, and sunken eyes. It is marked, too, in their tendency to strumous affections, and in their deplorably low habit of body. An abrasion of the skin, a mere scratch that on a healthy person would heal as soon as formed, becomes a serious sore on such patients as have only recently left the streets. "Gallons and gallons of tonics," we hear, had to be administered before this half-starved ship's crew reached an average of healthiness; and though, thanks to the constant care they have received, cases of sickness are rare among them now, the doctor continues his daily visit, and some hammocks were occupied when we went our rounds. The light and cheerful "sick bay" is only just finished and not fit for tenants yet, so the two or three lads under the doctor's care are swinging in their regular hammocks on the main deck.

When we inquire into the conduct of the ship's crew, the rapidity and success with which they have been converted from open savagery to a higher civilisation than is common among school-lads seem truly magical. "In honour, honesty, truthfulness, and good feeling," said Captain Alston, R.N., under whose care they are, and whose hearty personal interest in his charge was not the least pleasing experience of the day, "I would back my lads against those of Eton or Rugby, or of any public school in the kingdom. So strongly is this felt, that on a grave offence being committed the other day, it was decided to let the culprits be tried and sentenced by their peers. Every Friday afternoon, when fine, the boys go ashore in a body, and play cricket or football in the pretty private park you see through the trees yonder. The owner of this park allows them to use a portion

of it as their own playground, and to and from this they march from their landing-place in procession and singing merrily. On a recent afternoon, when the word was passed to fall in for the return home, four boys were missing. "Run away!" passed from mouth to mouth, and their schoolmates emphatically pronouncing it a shame, proceeded, uninstructed, to band themselves into parties of four for the search. They were unsuccessful, and the truants were eventually brought back by the local police. But the indignation of the whole school had been so marked that it was determined to utilise it for purposes of discipline. A court was formed by selecting the leading boy from each of the ten ship's messes, and constituting him a member. The runaways were formally charged with their offence, and the whole proceedings invested with full judicial solemnity. After a grave inquiry, the court found the prisoners guilty of the crime of running away "without excuse," and sentenced them to the following punishment for a month: each boy to be kept on prison diet of bread and water, to pick a pound of oakum after his regular day's work, and to be sent to Coventry in play-hours by the rest of the crew.

The sentence was confirmed by the highest authority on board, and rigidly carried out. At the time of our visit a few days had to elapse before the penal month expired; and the lads were still in "Coventry." The public opinion of the vessel so thoroughly affirmed the sentence of the court that the culprits had been as completely ostracised by their fellows as lepers were of old. This is the more significant from its denoting a complete reversal of tone in the little community. Very few months before theft was common, and discovery impossible. The store-rooms were broken open, the lockers rifled, and their contents strewed wastefully about the decks. The food taken was the same as that served out daily as rations; so every lad was asked whether he had enough to eat, and all answered in the affirmative. Still, despite the absence of excuse and of every precaution, burglary went on almost nightly. The instinct of stealing and of defying authority seemed too strong to be set aside; and as the lads refused to betray each other, the discipline of the ship was in serious jeopardy. Stronger locks were provided for the store-room doors, but the active little marauders, dropping silently from the deck, swarmed in at the port-holes, and were as successful as before. Again, the boys were constantly convicted of robbing each other, of lying, of dirty habits, and of other schoolboy crimes. It speaks volumes for the system that these have absolutely disappeared. Judicious discipline, and friendly co-operation and remonstrances, have absolutely made these boys ardent supporters instead of defiers of authority; and the confident cheeriness with which they are now setting about their work and play, proves them to have made the grand discovery that there is more real fun and happiness to be got out of an orderly than a disreputable life.

God save the Queen from some ninety lusty young throats, with officers, schoolmasters, and visitors joining in; a manly exhortation from the captain to fear God, do their duty, and honour the Queen, and the choir disperses to its work. A portion of the main deck is screened off with canvas for the school, and here brisk-eyed monitors, clothed like their fellows in the blue serge shirt and glazed hat of the man-of-war's man, are hearing lessons and giving instruction from their desks. Further on is the compass class, where the black and white discs are being worked in like manner by the elder boys for the benefit of the rest. The lead-line class is under the supervision of an officer, whose pupils are laughing heartily at the quaint similes with which he illustrates an example. One boat's crew is away pulling; two large parties are learning practical seamanship; another forms the tailor's, and another again the shoemaker's class. All busy, all cheerful, all healthy-looking and contented. Each of these boys is being fitted for the merchant service, and one of their number joined his ship a few weeks ago, the owners promising to give him their active support, and that he shall be promoted from step to step in due course, and a command given him directly he is competent. This is the first instance of a boy beginning the battle of life from the Chichester; but others are nearly ready, and every few weeks adds to the number.

We have said nothing of the religious training these lads undergo. It is ample and judicious, and, above all, popular. Great stress is laid on this by the responsible authorities, and as the boys before us are as open-visaged and unsanctimoniously natural as boys should be, we learn with satisfaction of their attention to the great principles of religion, and of its influence on their daily life.

The marvel is, how has it all been done in so short a time. In February, 1866, the opening supper was given to all comers, provided only they were boys, and destitute, at the Boys' Refuge in Great Queen-street. On the 31st of December last, fifty boys were received on board from the Refuge, and forty-five have been added since. The thieving, disobedience, and general misconduct, all took place since the latter date, and have been overcome subsequently. This, too, be it remembered, with the refuse of our juvenile population as material to work upon. We ask our guide and host, whether the docility, and exceptionally high sense of honour which he maintains to exist among his pupils, do not form an argument against some favourite and high-flown theories respecting "race." If six months suffice to convert the scum of the London gutters into beings who are in all essentials of morality superior to the flower of the land as seen at our great public schools, what becomes of the lofty privileges attributed to gentle blood? The eminently encouraging truth seems to be, that favourable surrounding, together with proper discipline and education, are more than a match for evil instincts, how-

ever deeply rooted. But a few autobiographies, taken verbatim from the boys themselves, will do more to show the antecedents of the Chichester's crew, and the extent of their improvement, than pages of mere generalisation:

W. H. Age, fifteen and a quarter. Born, Bristol. Father, journeyman shoemaker. Living. Ran away from home. No reason for it. Had worked at a tailor's for six months before running away. Two or three weeks coming up to London. Cadging. Joined a shoe-black society. Left it because they wanted him to become a Roman Catholic. Entered the Home. Eighteen months there. Shoemaker at the Home. Father knows of his being here.

G. C. N. Age, fifteen. Born, Shadwell. Parents, dead. Father, doctor. Robbed his father and ran from home. Went home again. Ran away again, after frequently robbing his father. A month on the streets. Then went to Refuge. Two years in Refuge. Tailoring in Refuge.

H. L. Age, fourteen and three-quarters. Born, Chesham, Bucks. Parents, dead. Father, butcher. Taken to Union at death of parents, at six years old. Remained in Union six years. Then taken out by an aunt, and lived with her till she died—about a year. Then brought by a gentleman of Chesham to the Refuge. Nine months there. Shoemaking.

F. G. Age, thirteen and a half. Born, Dover. Parents, living. Father, navy. In jail at present for beating his wife. Has been in ten times before. Lived eight years at home at Dover. Then family moved to Bedford. Remained there four or five years. Then when father was sent to prison, a gentleman of Bedford sent him to the Refuge. One month there.

W. H. P. Age, twelve and a half. Born, London. Father, dead. Bricklayer. Ran away from home soon after his father died. Brought back, and went on the streets again as often as brought back to his mother. About two years off and on the streets. Then at mother's application he was taken in the Refuge. One year in Refuge. Always had a bellyful on the streets; going in the mud for halfpence at Hungerford; stealing fruit at Covent-garden; sleeping in "ruins," &c.

W. H. Age, thirteen. Born, London. Parents, living. Father, gentleman's servant. Left home a year ago. Parents abandoned him. Went out one day, and returned and found them gone. Three months on the streets. Holding horses, cleansing out cab-yards, &c. Slept in omnibuses, &c. Sent to prison for running off with a horse and trap, for seven days. Then sent to the Refuge. Thirteen months there. Tailoring.

W. P. Age, sixteen and a quarter. Born, London. Parents, dead. Father, painter. When father died went to a friend's in the country. Lived there one year and a half. Then was sent to a situation in London at a doctor's shop. Four months there. Then taken away

by his sister. Then went to a coffee-shop. Seven months there. Then his brother got him into the Refuge, taking him out of the coffee-shop. Three years in Refuge. Wood-chopper. Always sick there. Suffering from his chest.

J. M. Age, fifteen and three-quarters. Born, London. Parents, alive. Father, labourer. Two brothers besides self. Left home nine months ago, and went on streets because he had nothing to do at home. On and off. Carrying parcels and minding horses. Slept in the casual wards. Then went to Home. Seven months in home. Shoemaking.

P. K. Age, fourteen. Born, Norwood. Parents, dead. Never heard what his father was. Went on the streets at twelve years old, because his brother used to make him read the Bible. Two years on the streets. Stealing and begging. Three months in prison for stealing a purse. Always had plenty to eat on the streets, from servants, &c. Went from the streets to the Refuge. Fifteen months there. Shoemaking.

J. O. Age, fifteen. Born, Canterbury. Mother, alive. When last heard of, three years ago, in London. Does not know whether he has a father or not. Never heard. Left Canterbury when a baby. Mother in London lived with a young man who had deserted his wife and family. She went into service three years ago. Then went to live with grandmother in London for six months, then a year at some stables in Finsbury, but left after, being too small. Went back to grandmother. Grandfather shortly after died. Grandmother married again. Her new husband, about two months after marriage, being a drunken brute, kicked her in the spine and killed her, after having killed his two step-children by pouring boiling water out of a kettle on them. After grandmother's death, was sent from the George-yard Shelter to the Home. Two years in Home. Shoemaking. Reads and writes very little; hardly write at all. Only about once a month at school in the Home. Does not know what baptism means. Does not suppose he has been baptised.

G. B. Age sixteen. Has been baptised. Born, Andover. Father, dead. Tailor. Has not heard of mother for seven years. Mother used to drink. Deserted her husband years ago. Four years ago father and family came up to London. Died one year ago. Three months on streets after father died. Going the round of casual wards. Then went to Home. Ten months in Home. Can read and write. Tailoring.

J. M. Age fifteen. Has been baptised. Born, London. Parents, dead. Father, coalheaver. Died five years ago. Mother and boy tramping for four years in Kent. Hop-picking, harvesting, and begging in summer. Workhouse in winter. After mother died, worked in a capsule manufactory. Left it with a bad foot. When cured in workhouse, they gave him two shillings. Bought box and brushes. Kept it for four days.

Then sent by a gentleman to the Home. Nine weeks in home. Can read and write. Shoemaking.

W. S. Age, fifteen and three-quarters. Has been baptised. Born, Whitty. Parents, dead. Father at docks. Family left Whitty when four years old. Father died nine months ago. Lived with father till death. Working at paper-stainer's. When father died, discharged, trade being slack then. Two months on streets, selling cigar lights, sweeping crossings, begging. Has taken as much as two shillings in a day. One night went to a casual ward, and was sent up to the Home. Nine weeks there. Cannot read nor write. Three times at school when there. Shoemaking.

G. H. Age, sixteen and a half. Not baptised. Baptist. Born, London. Father, dead. Three years ago. Then went to work at paper-mills. Six months there. Then joined a collier six months, and left to join a schooner. Could not join schooner, but went into a shrimp boat. Left to try and get a ship. Couldn't succeed. Had to go to the Union. Three or four months there. Then went to Refuge. Four and a half months there.

W. S. Age, fourteen and three-quarters. Born, London. Parents, dead. Father died four years ago. When father died, went to workhouse. Sent from there to Sutton's school, Surrey. Stopped there two or three years. Left to find work in London. Couldn't get any. Two months on the streets, sometimes paying for lodgings, sometimes in casual wards. Then went to Refuge. Eight or nine months there. Shoemaking. Mother died before father. Three sisters. One brother. Does not know where he is.

W. C. Age, seventeen and three-quarters. Born, Bridgewater, Somerset. Parents, living. Father, hatter. Living now in London. All came together. At home till eighteen months ago. Working with father. Trade slack. Obligated to leave. Went to uncle's, a travelling cutler, who took charge of him, having no sons, and being well to do. Left uncle because he did not like him to go with other boys. Three days on streets. Then went to Refuge, telling a lie that his uncle had gone away, he did not know where. Ten months there.

A. P. Age, thirteen and three-quarters. Born, London. Parents, living. Father, journeyman tailor. At home till a year ago. When hearing there was to be a "good supper" at the Refuge, went there. Had often run away from home before, robbed father, &c. Went to Refuge next day, told a lot of lies, no father, &c., and was taken in. Nine months in Refuge. Has seen father since he has been on board. Told father, "It's no use you trying to get me home; I mean to go to sea." Father had tried to get him to sea three weeks before the supper, by taking him to the "Mariners' Society," but he was not old enough for them.

J. S. Age, thirteen and three-quarters. Don't know where born. Lived in London as far as he can remember. Father died nine years

ago. Mother supposed alive. Not seen her for two years. She used to sell fruit in the streets, and get drunk. Left her because she couldn't keep him. Has one brother in a Reformatory. Three or four months on streets. Went to the supper. Then taken into Refuge.

B. M. Age, sixteen and a half. Born, London. Father died three years ago. Lived with mother six months after father died. Eighteen months then on and off away from his mother, picking up jobs in Billingsgate. Mother about the streets with no home. Drinks. Not kind always. Ten months in Refuge. Went to the supper first. Couldn't read when came to ship. Did not learn in Refuge.

The foregoing little histories are fair samples of the rest. They are also fair samples of miniature autobiographies to be learnt at most reformatories. Desire to make out a case, and to interest the hearer by exciting his wonder or commiseration, prevents him from putting implicit faith in all he is told even by the most artless little narrators. On the present occasion we gathered, however, from the general tenor of what was told us, that no boy need sleep in a casual ward who is not slow and stupid. He can always beg or "cadge" enough to pay for his own supper and lodging, if he be so minded. Old ladies and young children are his most regular supporters; but the general disposition to almsgiving prevalent in London makes it easy for a sharp, unscrupulous young vagabond to live by his wits. A reckless independence, and an entire freedom from restraint, compensate in some measure for the uncertainties and vicissitudes of the career. But the boys before us are wise enough to know that the police-station and the prison form its inevitable end; so that, after the meeting of a few days since at Exeter Hall, when they were marched at night through their old haunts, and within sight and hail of many of their old companions, not one of them attempted to desert or to break the ranks.

Passing once more to the daily routine of the ship, we find the great want to be a model vessel on which ropes could be handled and sails set in all weathers. These lads are only now recovering from years of unwholesome living, and their weak young arms cannot grapple with the Chichester's tackle when it is wet or cold. A full-sized model, which shall stand on the main deck, and on which every portion of practical seamanship can be taught, is the captain's crying want. This can be got for some sixteen pounds, and as accommodation for double the number of boys, we see, is vacant for want of funds, the longed-for model—small as its cost would be—must be a luxury deferred. The Chichester is but one branch of a comprehensive scheme for reclaiming the outcasts of our London streets. The honorary secretary of the Great Queen-street Refuge, Mr. Williams, acting with other gentlemen, has instituted, and is instituting, establishments of various characters, but with the same aim. They believe that much of the crime and misery of

this great city may be prevented by the simple process of educating children for whom no one cares, by helping the helpless, and by smoothing some of the difficulties which beset those who are at once young, friendless, and poor. They emulate, in fact, the "Children's Aid Society" of New York, mentioned in a recent number of this journal,* and on a scale which is limited only by the funds at their disposal. That the Admiralty should have refused to find a spar towards rigging up the hulk they lent, and that the entire cost of fitting up the Chichester—amounting to some three thousand pounds—should have fallen upon the society, is, of course, strictly in accordance with the traditions of that wonderful department. The bars of iron pointed out as "Seely's pigs," and now lying in the hold for ballast, instead of paving the dockyards—the use to which they had been applied previously—make one speculate upon the amount of good to be effected if the money, amounting to millions, proved to be now wasted in "re-construction" and in other expensive conceits and ignorances of "My Lords," were as usefully applied.

Some years since, the Refuges, of which the Chichester is a branch, had considerable aid from the Privy Council—half the salaries of the master, one-third the cost of the materials used in the industrial schools, and a capitation grant of five shillings a year for each boy having been paid. All these privileges have been withdrawn, and the good work depends solely upon the liberality of the charitable. State help and State sanction are limited to lending a ship's hulk, and the Admiralty declines to even avail itself of the services of the boys when trained, unless they are able to produce the register of their birth—a sheer impossibility in the majority of the cases—an impossibility, indeed, which had a great share in bringing this floating reformatory into existence. The merchant service presents, however, an ample and remunerative field. The demand there for trained lads far exceeds the supply, and there is no fear of the young "Chichesters" remaining on hand.

If, then, the money annually given by good impulsive people to child-beggars were devoted to their permanent reclamation, the benefit conferred on the community would be simply incalculable. For it must be remembered that even when Refuges, Home, and training-ship are filled, they have subtracted mere drops from the ocean of juvenile vice, depravity, and helplessness supplied by London alone. These are successful experiments; but they are experiments only, and have been stopped half way for lack of means. Is it very unreasonable to ask, in these days of parliamentary commissions' inquiries and reports, that some authoritative investigation shall be made into the feasibility of converting felons in embryo into useful members of society, and that the devil's training-school shall be de-

prived of its pupils, to the general benefit of the community, and the gradual emptying of our jails?

AN INVOCATION.

I.
COME forth from the valley, come forth from the hill,
Come forth from the workshop, the mine, and the mill,
From pleasure or slumber, from study or play,
Come forth in your myriads to aid us to-day:
There's a word to be spoken, a deed to be done,
A truth to be utter'd, a cause to be won.
Come forth in your myriads! come forth, every one!

II.
Come, youths, in your vigour; come, men, in your prime;
Come, age, with experience fresh gather'd from time;
Come, workers! you're welcome; come, thinkers, you must!
Come thick as the clouds of the midsummer dust,
Or the waves of the sea gleaming bright in the sun!
There's a truth to be told, and a cause to be won—
Come forth in your myriads, come forth every one!

WILD LIFE.

It is to the spirit of adventure that England is, in a great measure, indebted for her greatness. Ardent and eager-minded men are always ready to start on the most perilous enterprise at the risk of life and of everything else that is dear to them. Whether the object be the discovery of a passage at the North Pole, or of the sources of the Nile, of the mysteries of Mecca, of the unknown tracks in the interior of Africa, or of the remains of Nineveh—a Franklin, a Baker, a Burton, a Livingstone, a Layard, are at hand to start, backed by some geographical or other society, and the result to science, history, and geography has been great. Other men, either by accident or from personal enterprise, have done good service in the same cause without any claim to national reward. The adventures of a Robinson Crusoe are of universal interest, and it is in this latter category that we must place the recital by E. H. Lamont of his personal adventures in the South Pacific Islands, or Polynesia. The story is a romance of real life, graphically told. Shipwrecked and a prisoner, Lamont gradually becomes a friend and chieftain of the natives. Seeing little chance of escape, he follows the old maxim, "Do at Rome as the Romans do." He marries various young ladies, not to offend their mammams and papas, who, if he had declined, would probably have speared him and served him up to the disconsolate and discarded females, fried or stewed, according to their peculiar taste. He refuses the companionship of a queen, which greatly annoys her royal husband, who takes it as an insult. Hospitality in the South Pacific Islands is carried to an extreme. At Utah, an hypocritical veil of sanctity is thrown over the immoral life

* See THE DEVIL'S TRAINING SCHOOL vol. xvii., p. 400.

of the saints which renders it damnable in the eyes of all upright-minded Christians. If we can trust the recital before us—and we believe we can, as it bears a truthful tone—the simple-minded, generous-hearted islanders of the South Pacific are not actuated by base or sensual motives. They are children of nature, wild flowers of the forest, open to intense love or hatred, staunch friends, implacable enemies, putting civilised beings to shame. We regret to add, that the missionaries sent out by persons meaning well, at an enormous cost, have often done more harm than good among these people.

But we will let Lamont tell his own tale. Settled in California for trading purposes, and business being slack in the winter months, he arranged with his partner to make a trading voyage through some of the islands of the South Pacific, which he estimated would occupy not more than four months, permitting their return in time for the spring trade. They were joined by a Californian gentleman who professed an intimate knowledge of the islands, and they chartered a fast-sailing clipper-brig, called the *Chatham*, of some three hundred tons burden, for the expedition. The crew consisted of the captain, one George Snow, an old whaler, a native of Nantucket, a mate, the captain's brother, Juan, the cook, an old man-o'-war's man, called Bill, a Portuguese, called Joe, and two Huahine Kanakas, respectively called John and Mowry. The captain turned out a drunkard, and the crew were not to be relied upon. This was found out too late; the final result was the loss of the vessel. The *Chatham* started on her trip on the 14th of October, 1852. After a passing visit to the French settlement at the Marquesas, the *Chatham* arrived without any incident worth relating off the Bay of Hana-ti-Tapa.

"This bay," says our author, "is small, and sheltered on all sides, except the west, from which point the wind rarely blows. There is good anchorage in it, but room only for three or four vessels to swing at a time. We had not yet dropped our anchor, when we observed the beach crowded with natives, and, from the display of white tapa, the fair sex evidently formed a large portion of the multitude. Several canoes were already pulling out towards us. In one of the first of these was a figure arrayed in bright scarlet, who the interpreter informed us was the king, and in a moment he and his native courtiers were on board."

Kings and queens abound in these islands, and the following description may serve for nearly all of them:

"His majesty's robes consisted of a small scarlet blanket fastened with a wooden skewer across his neck, and a tapa girt round his loins. The queen, who also came on board, was clothed in the usual sheet of white tapa, which, leaving the right arm bare, is cast over the left shoulder, and completely envelopes the form to the ankles. Her hair, raised entirely up round her head, was folded on one side into a kind of pinnacle,

which was swathed in a roll of very fine tapa like muslin. Her ears were perforated, and ornamented with curiously cut bones or ivory, and around her neck were some strings of scented nuts and wreaths of flowers. The arm was tattooed elaborately, from the finger-ends to near the shoulder, with a deep-blue tinge, which was not unbecoming. Her feet and ankles seemed to be covered with beautifully worked blue stockings, and as I stooped to admire them, her majesty, flattered by the attention, rather shocked my modesty by suddenly, amid the uproarious mirth of all her court, lifting the drapery to such a height that I observed the same delicate tracery, which was evidently due to the art of the tattooer, extending above the knee. I presume it was my admiration of her majesty's stockings that pleased her, for her attentions became so pointed that I was compelled to make a hasty retreat from the cabin."

Throughout the whole of the group of islands the females are described as of beautiful form and of gentle manners. The *Chatham* paid a visit in turn to the different islands, trafficking with the natives, taking in sandal-wood and live stock in exchange for old guns, flints, powder, and blankets. A sunset in the Pacific is a sight, once seen, not to be forgotten.

"The sun had already sunk below the horizon when we cleared the bay of Eka-Hoa. As we stood out into the wide Pacific, the clouds were tinged with the brightest crimson by the rays of the departed orb, and the waves, tinted by their reflected colours, danced brightly around us, whilst the tall pinnacles of Dominica and Oatin showed their sharp outlines in bold relief against the glowing sky. The scene was a most lovely one; the sea breeze had fallen away, but a gentle land breeze, just enough to fill our sails, began to breathe over the water, and we glided pleasantly, though slowly, on our way."

Tahiti is the next point visited, now inseparably connected with the names of Pritchard and Queen Pomare. The natives have nearly all embraced Christianity. The French are firmly settled as a protectorate government, apparently to the entire satisfaction of the natives. The British missionaries, however, to whom the French offered to give salaries if they would disconnect themselves from the London Society, and place themselves under the French laws, with two exceptions indignantly refused, and retired to other islands of the Pacific. The morality of the Tahitian nymphs is anything but exemplary, and the inhabitants are proverbially idle; many miles of the richest land are allowed to run waste. The island has been so often described that it is needless to dwell upon its natural beauties.

A visit to Queen Pomare is interesting.

"The second day after my arrival," says our author, "I went with my friend H. (settled at Tahiti) to visit Queen Pomare. Passing through an avenue, at which a sentinel was placed, we

arrived at the palace, a large cottage-shaped house, pleasantly situated at one end of a green lawn, ornamented with trees and shrubs. We at once entered, without ceremony, from the verandah into a large public room, scantily furnished in European style, but abundantly strewed with mats instead of carpets, on which squatted some women, sewing. One pretty young girl, probably a princess royal, with a fan, brushed away the obtrusive flies from the face of a sleeping infant—a recent addition to the royal family, who lay upon some bright-coloured pillows on the floor. The queen herself was seated on a sofa, but rose on our entrance, and advanced to H., whom she shook warmly by the hand, honouring me in the same manner when I had been introduced. She seemed a decent, motherly-looking woman, of about forty-five years of age, with an expression of care on her face, which was certainly not handsome, and had little of that softness generally characteristic of the Tahitians. Her dress, on this occasion, was of black satin, made in the usual flowing style of the people. She displayed no ornaments, and had neither shoes nor stockings. I observed on the wall a large oil-painting in a gorgeous frame, representing her in a magnificent European dress, in which I afterwards saw her, but I must confess not to advantage, for it seemed out of character, and she did not look at all at ease in it. When she entered into conversation with H., which she did in a lively, fluent style, her face was seen to greater advantage, particularly when she smiled. I subsequently met Pomare Tanie, the king-consort, at dinner with H. He is a tall, handsome, noble-looking fellow, of a decidedly jovial disposition, his principal characteristic being a ready appreciation of the good things of this life in eating and drinking. Their children (I should say, her children) were most of them handsome; one of the boys, a lad of perhaps twelve or fourteen years of age, clothed in a blue jacket and white trousers, having a remarkably intelligent and manly countenance. When I first met Pomare Tanie he wore merely a black satin shirt and poriew; but I saw him, on another occasion, in a general's uniform of bright sky-blue, profusely embroidered with gold lace, and with large epaulets on the shoulders. In the cocked-hat and boots which he also wore, he did not appear at all at ease."

During the short stay of a few days at Tahiti, the Chatham did a good business in disposing of the stock procured at the Marquesas; she was repainted, and laid in merchandise suited for "the Harvey group." She first touched at Huahine to take in cocoa-nuts as food for live stock. Tahiti and Morea are frequently laid down in charts as a portion of the Society Islands, whereas they belong to the Georgian group. The cluster to the westward, commencing with Huahine, alone constitute the Society Islands. The settlement at Huahine consists of some hundred habitations scattered round the bay, for the most part plastered and

whitewashed cottages with verandahs, but with many native-built huts interspersed. The church, which is of stone, and the house of the king, both erected on little promontories, are prominent objects. The residence of Mr. Barfe, the missionary, is pleasantly situated on a rising ground, overlooking the village and harbour: a lovely spot for a residence. The Chatham was delayed here some time owing to the drunken habits of the captain, and everything on board appears to have been in a state of utter confusion and disgraceful disorder. At last she proceeds again to sea, making for the Harvey group.

"We now proceeded again to sea," says Lamont, "steering our course to Manakè, or Parry's Island, one of the Harvey group. These islands, ten in number, are situated between nineteen degrees ten seconds to twenty-two degrees twenty seconds south latitude, and one hundred and fifty-five degrees to one hundred and sixty-one degrees west longitude. The great navigator, Cook, whose name they sometimes bear, had the honour of first discovering them as early as 1773. One of these [from which the others take their name], erroneously supposing it to be the principal of the group, he named Harvey Island. It is really one of the least important, being one, or rather two, of those low sandy islands connected by a sea-washed reef, its scanty soil producing none of the tropical fruits save the cocoa-nut. It is about eighteen miles in circumference, and, when first seen, was reported as uninhabited; but, on a subsequent visit of Cook in 1777, some sixty or seventy natives were found on it, who are described by him as extremely savage, and thievish in propensities. Rorotonga, containing a population of some five or six thousand, and measuring about thirty miles round, is the principal island of the group, not only in extent and population, but in fertility of soil and beauty of scenery. It has one or two harbours for small craft, which the others are deficient in. Cook never saw this island. The Reverend Mr. Williams, the indefatigable Polynesian missionary, is said to have first discovered this lovely spot. Some teachers from the Society Islands were placed on it by him, and in about two years the whole population was converted to Christianity. Mangala, or Mangier, is some twenty-five miles in circumference, and has about two thousand inhabitants. The population of Aitutakè is about the same number, and that of Atien, which has a circuit of about twenty miles, one thousand five hundred. Manakè, or Parry's Island, which is not mentioned by Cook, is said to have been discovered by the missionaries in 1823. It is not more than sixteen miles round, with a decreasing population of two or three hundred. Mitiaro, near it, is still smaller. Palmerston's, considerably to the westward (by some hydrographers included in the group), is a low cocoa-nut island, and uninhabited. This, with two other small uninhabited islands, concludes the number."

Kings abound in Polynesia like cockroaches.

Mankè and Mitiaro are subject to the three kings of Atien. Lamont's description of these islands, and of the habits of the natives, is not the least interesting portion of his book. It is a pity that he has not added a map of the islands, which would greatly enhance the value of the work; and we also find fault with him for not giving dates of sailing, though we make out that he sailed on the 14th of October, 1852, on his expedition, and was wrecked on the 7th of January, 1853.

Tomano-wood was the chief object of his visit to the Harvey Islands. It resembles mahogany, is most beautifully waved, and is capable of a high polish, but very hard, and rather difficult to work. It is found in large quantities at Mankè. At Mangaia we are introduced into the domicile of the all-important Mikenarè, or missionary, Mr. Gill, at Onoroa, the capital of the island, and a very desirable residence it seems to be. "Such is the power exercised by the missionary, that he is high priest, lawgiver, and virtually, though not nominally, absolute monarch; and, according to his disposition, may do much good or evil in his office." For a very interesting chapter on missionaries, we must refer our readers to the book itself. Many will, probably, not endorse Mr. Lamont's views. We give a specimen:

"The missionary in the South Pacific has a spacious house, far superior to what most of our poor clergy enjoy at home, in the most salubrious and delightful climate in the world. He has many servants to attend upon him at little or no expense. There is no schism in faith here, no opposition to his particular dogmas, and a whole people look up to him superstitiously as a superior being. . . . A respectable salary is paid to every missionary, which is increased with every child born to him. The fruits of the earth are yielded here almost spontaneously, and the other few necessities or luxuries of life are laid down at his door on the half-yearly visits of the missionary ship. Many of the missionaries do an extensive trade with the natives, and as they are exempt from the tax which they have instituted against other foreign residents, amounting almost to prohibition to people of such small means as land here, their profits are enormous, cloth that costs three-pence being sold at a shilling per yard, and everything else in proportion. Spirits are prohibited, and tobacco, though sold by the missionary, is not used in Mangaia on a Sunday under a severe penalty. . . . The forms of religion are attended to amongst these islands with superstitious reverence; but morality of heart and life is perhaps at a lower standard than on the day when Christianity was first introduced among them. Sincerely honest men and truly virtuous women are, notwithstanding all the missionaries have done, very rare commodities. We may be permitted to doubt whether the transformation of the natives into Europeans of the modern type is altogether a desirable consummation. The coal-scuttle bonnets, cropped hair, and sanctified

look are poor substitutes for the sunny locks, bright eyes, and happy countenances of these children of nature. At Aitutakè the missionary laws prohibit the use of tobacco altogether."

Aitutakè was the place which it was intended to visit last, and with a pleasant breeze the head of the Chatham was turned once more towards California. On the night of the 6th of January, or rather morning of the 7th, 1853, the vessel became a total wreck; and we now come to the wonderful adventures of Lamont and his party among the Pacific islanders.

"I had retired to rest early," says Lamont. "I was a light sleeper, especially in the neighbourhood of land, having no confidence in either the master or officers; and as we were passing some islands laid down upon our chart (although, according to the captain's observations, we should have been far out of sight of any of them), I felt uneasy. At four o'clock A.M. the changing of the watch awoke me, and as it was Mr. Snow's watch on deck, I did not feel again inclined to sleep. As the mate was turning in, he told the captain he saw something like a dark cloud ahead, and warned him to look out for a squall. It appears, from the statement of one of the boys in this watch, that shortly after he went on deck he saw Captain Snow come out of his cabin, whisper for a short time with his brother, and then retire. This he might have done by the back door of the cabin without my observing it. On this occasion the oldest and safest hand of the watch was never brought on deck; and the look-out forward consisted of two inefficient hands, one a Kanaka and the other a mere lad. The man at the wheel could not see ahead, on account of the house on deck, immediately in front of him. About twenty minutes afterwards, as I looked through the cabin door out on deck, a shock like that produced by a collision passed through the vessel, and I thought I beheld land close to us. The ship's head, however, rose on the wave towards the sky, and I waited for an instant till she dipped again, when I beheld a long line of black low coast stretching far on either side, girt with a circle of foaming breakers, the roar of which was already in my ears. A westerly wind blew dead ashore; we were running right before it, and were not a gun-shot from the reef. I sprang at once on deck, followed almost immediately by all the crew. 'Hard up!' some one shouted, and up went the wheel, the yards were trimmed to the wind, and the good vessel, obedient to her command, worked round, giving us yet a chance, when another voice called out 'Hard down,' and the mate at the helm obeyed too faithfully the order, depriving us of the last hope of saving the ship. The next moment her bottom struck a sunken rock, making the vessel reel, and almost throwing us off our feet. A white-crested wave, raising us on its top, bore us onward with impetuous force, and dashed us amid the boiling foam on the rugged walls of coral. Fortunately, we went head on, and our bow struck into a little bight

of the rock, where it was firmly bedded. About midship we rested on a rock below, on which each wave that dashed on our stern and broke over us raised the vessel, and let her drop with such force that we feared she would part in two. The spars swung and shivered with the concussion, threatening to fall about our ears, and the sails, which no one ventured aloft to furl, began to lash the yards and fly in shreds, whilst the parting stays menaced us with tottering masts. Our only trust was that the vessel would hold together till daylight. The supposed cloud seen by the mate proved to be the Penryhn Islands, laid down on every chart, and mentioned particularly by Wilks."

The natives board the vessel; the crew get safely to shore, but are not ill treated. Gradually they become friends with these primitive people. Lamont is soon a general favourite, and, seeing no chance of escape, gives up the idea after several attempts, and makes himself at home as best he can, becoming the adopted son of one of the chieftains. The name of that portion of the island upon which the Chatham was wrecked is called Mangerongaro. The island is from four to five miles long, and about a quarter of a mile broad. The description of the habits and customs of these islanders cannot fail to be read with interest; but we have only space for a few extracts. Gradually Lamont, who had been adopted by a chief, with his numerous savage relations, visits all the islands, helps his friends in their warfare, and keeps up his dignity by occasionally treating them with contempt. Here is not a bad description of a young savage's home:

"I had scarcely left my hut," he says, "when Turua (a young chief) came running forward, and pressed me, with his winning smile, to accompany him. This I did with pleasure, and he led the way by a path I had not before seen, through the centre of the island. The densest portion of the grove he pointed to with evident marks of satisfaction, as the trees were all loaded with fruit; and the district through which I was passing I was informed was mine, *because I knew it was his.*"

Lamont had already succeeded in understanding the natives, and making himself understood. What high standard of civilisation can beat those hospitable words of Turua, a young naked savage of the Penryhn Islands?

"So dense was the shade here, that the sky was completely obscured from our view, and it was only when I had arrived at a neatly gravelled space that I observed a house, to which our path led. A little girl was busily engaged preparing a native oven, and a young woman was sitting in front of the house, with her head down, scraping some fruit. Neither observed us till we were close upon them. On seeing us the young woman, who proved to be Ocura (the young chieftain's wife), dropped the food she was preparing, and, clapping her hands, advanced timidly, and saluted me. She then ran into the house, and spread mats for us to sit on.

"Ocura, when she married Turua, was one of the richest heiresses in Omuka, being the daughter of a great chief, not only in that place but also in Matunga. All the property came from her; for Turua, being a younger son, was not at all wealthy. Ocura was very ambitious, and was always stimulating her husband to take a more leading part in the affairs of the nation than he felt his position warranted, or his natural diffidence would allow.

"Supper was at last announced by the little girl. Turua sprang up one of the nearest trees like a monkey. These people climb better than any of the other islanders I had seen; and soon a few shocks on the ground told the little girl that the 'muco mucos' had fallen, when she immediately ran and fetched them to the house. These young nuts are easily skinned, and, the tops being broken off, a delicious beverage is ready prepared by the hand of nature; for there is no more refreshing drink than the water of the young green cocoa-nut, with its cool and slightly tart vegetable taste. The blackened fish-bowls were opened, and proved to contain my favourite *ruchè*. A shell of 'neu oora,' smoking hot, was brought in, and when the upper cover was removed, the little leaf was seen spread on the top to prevent the dust entering by the eye of the upper shell—a precaution that is taken only by very exemplary housekeepers. After washing her beautiful little hands in water poured on them from the eye of a large entire shell, used as a water-jug, Ocura brought down a small bag of fine matting, and from a number of pearl tees, or Penryhn spoons, selected one brightly polished on the back as well as front, but not much improved by some rude carving on it. A greater treat was in reserve for me, namely, a couple of cooked 'utos' (apple of the growing nut), which I pretended not to know. After trying a piece, however, I suddenly clapped my hands in their own fashion, and, placing one hand over my mouth, exclaimed, 'Ka oaa, su more!' (Good Heavens, how delightful!), at which Turua burst into a loud laugh, and Ocura, in her delight, threw herself before me and kissed my feet."

At Tokeraù our narrator is offered a fine buxom young woman, of about twenty, called Roberan Shè, as a wife, and has some difficulty in avoiding matrimony.

At last he is driven into that happy state, and marries "Haka Moè Kokara," alias "the Sweet Sleeper." She is thus described: "She had large dark eyes, animated with a brilliant expression; her nose was small and straight, and when her bright lips were parted showed exquisite teeth, whilst her long black dishevelled tresses fell over and partially enveloped her graceful form."

Rubbing noses is the friendly mode of greeting between lovers and acquaintances. Our author's nose must have suffered considerably. The portrait of Chera Puna is a pretty picture; but in his third wife, Haka Puta, Lamont found a devoted companion.

Matrimony in the Penrhyn Islands is as serious a business as it is in England, and requires some consideration. It is true, no clergyman is required; but if you rub your nose against your bride elect's nose, pat her on the head, and call her wife in the presence of witnesses, it holds good as it would in Scotland. There is no court of probate and divorce, no Sir Cresswell Cresswell, no damages asked or given; but if you marry into a tribe you become one of it, and your father-in-law, who generally uses a sharp-pointed spear instead of the little cane carried by more civilised men, and has his clothes not from Poole's, but from Dame Nature, would unhesitatingly run you through the back, or knock your brains out, if you did anything against the regulations of his tribe. Our author was forced into this third marriage. The young lady was violently in love with him, and the tribe wished it. We quote his own words:

"I felt sorry for her, but I was inexorably hard-hearted, and told her I should leave that evening. I tried to disengage myself from her, but, throwing herself on the ground, she clung to me, exclaiming, 'Cary coi ahana! Cary coi ahana!' (You shall not go.) She screamed for help, and not without success, for several women—amongst the rest, her mother—attracted by her shrieks, rushed to her assistance. All things considered, why not take unto myself another wife? Having two already, I need not scruple about a third, and, so resolving, I raised my dark-skinned beauty from her recumbent position, patted her on the head, and, calling her my wife, said I would take her to Matunga; whereat, in testimony of delight, she brought her nose into contact with mine, and treated me to an amount of friction which was more flattering than agreeable. Our party continued to swell till nearly the whole village had congregated; and when they heard the result of all the noise, the entire crowd returned in great joy to the hamlet. As for the little girl, she seemed overjoyed beyond all proper decorum, dancing along before the party, and performing her merriest antics for my amusement. Couriers were despatched to bring in all the kith and kin of the bride and their friends. The marriage breakfast was not magnificent, although in the royal family. It is not usual for these people to make much, if any, distinction on such occasions; and they have nothing corresponding to our bridecake—in fact, it was strictly an ordinary meal, the same as on any other day. The bride herself was not visible, custom, rather than modesty, compelling her to remain in retirement. After the morning meal, the different groups assembled round the chief's tent, where the groom and his friends were already seated. The men formed in a row for the *pehu* (ceremony), and the women, before sitting down, arranged their titchès, that they might not crumple them, as they prepared to join the chant. The bride, meanwhile, had not appeared; and it was not till she had been angrily called, that, from a closed tent, some young

girls emerged with what seemed to be a bundle of mats in the centre. This, however, was really the young bride, who, coming forth, ran towards the tent where I was seated, and then, darting back, was again enveloped in the mats and withdrawn to the remotest corner of the house. The bride does not entirely disrobe herself of the matting for several days after the marriage, when she appears with the titchè, which she wears constantly for the remainder of her life. Whilst the young lady hides her maiden blushes under the matting, and the gentleman sits demurely, but more confidently, in front of the hut, the ceremony of the *pehu* commences, accompanied by rather an extra amount of crying, scratching, and bleeding, making a most melancholy affair of the happy event. The bride is then handed over to the oldest relatives or friends present for some future ceremonies, which over, the happy couple retire to their new abode."

Haka Puta makes an excellent housekeeper, but gets jealous of Chera Puna. She tells her husband she will leave him, when he observes she has no canoe. The brave girl replies:

"No canoe! No, true; but I can swim; the girls of Tantua can swim better than the men of Omuka, and I will swim back (ten miles). You wouldn't give me a canoe, even to save me from the sharks; but you can keep your canoe for Chera Puna, and your fish for Chera Puna. Wa, wa, piki!—and you can leave me. Why did you not stay with her when you presented her with fish and cocoa-nuts? Why did you not keep her in your arms? Why come back to me? I don't want you. For shame! Go off to her now!"

We candidly own, as disinterested critics, that we entirely side with Haka Puta's sentiments.

We have not touched upon the adventures of the other members of the unfortunate Chatham, or on Lamont's desperate attempts to escape in a canoe of his own fabrication. The desire to return to a civilised land drowned every other consideration.

"During all this time," says Lamont, "I had never ceased to keep my daily watch for the ship that never came. It was approaching the season when whalers from the north frequently take a voyage through the southern latitudes to fill up with sperm oil after their cruise among the regions of the bight whale, which produces the common whale oil. . . . One day, as I was staggering along under the weight of a huge plank for building purposes, I heard, some way off, yet distinct enough to make my heart bound with hope, the long wished-for words, 'Te oaka nuè' (the great ship). The sound to me was a promise of redemption. Home, lost friends, past scenes, crowded on my mind, almost overwhelming my reason. Casting my plank from my shoulder, I rushed towards the village, where I found the natives running to and fro in almost as great excitement as myself, rapidly arming, to be prepared for any emergency. I was informed that a large ship had been reported by a canoe as having been seen passing the island of

Tepuka. I begged the natives to launch a canoe on the ocean side, but could not get a man to lend a hand in transporting one across the island from the lagoon, where they were commonly kept. They availed themselves of every ridiculous excuse for their passive detention of me. Suddenly, I recollected having seen in Haka-Shusha, near the dangerous outlet to the south, a large canoe in such a position that I thought I might be able to get it into the water. Half frantic, I ran along the now naked sands of the inner reef, regardless of the prickly coral points and shells. When I got to the spot, a sail was distinctly visible keeping along the coast. The sight added fresh energy to my exertions, and, with the assistance of some broken pandanas boughs as rollers, I succeeded in getting the cumbrous machine into the water. Alas! all my toil was in vain. The canoe leaked so badly, and as the ship already stood well up to the southern end of Haka-Shusha, my labours seemed doomed to be fruitless. Some natives approaching, I desired them to make a fire, and, having collected great piles of the withered leaves of the pandanas, I kindled them into flames, hoping to attract notice from the vessel. I also went out to some rocks at the extreme end of the island, and, attaching my shirt to a spear, waved it to and fro in the expectation of its being seen by some one on board. When the noble vessel came towards the spot where I stood, I shouted at the top of my voice, which, however, was lost in the sound of the breakers. Oh! how my heart sank, and hope died in my breast, as I saw her glide rapidly from me. When she had well cleared the land, she again rounded to, and stood up along the western shore towards Sararak. An idea now flashed across my mind that some of our people residing in Tepuka might have got on board, and were bringing the ship round to Mangerongaro to my rescue. The wind was on her quarter, and though she swept along more rapidly than I could run, I pursued her with all the anxiety of despair. The sun had already set, but the crimson sky still showed the ship in black relief, when, panting with fatigue, I reached the Mangerongaro village. . . . The light from her quarter, that for some time had flickered like a guiding-star across the wave, gradually disappeared. Fatigued in mind and body, I threw myself down on the beach, a prey to grief. A drowning man will catch at a straw to save himself from sinking. Fearing that the vessel might lose the bearings of the island during the night, I kept the whole coast in flames with pandanas, hara leaves, and boughs of palm. The long looked-for morn appeared at length, but no ship. The day brightened, and passed; the evening set in, and still there was no appearance of her. As she might have run more off in the night than she could make up in the day, I still kept the beacon-fires bright during the night; but the ship was gone. The disappointment completely overwhelmed me, and I became so savage that the natives feared to approach

me. When I slept, they stole to the entrance of my hut, and, placing food before me, would sit down at a distance and watch till I had taken it."

Fortune favours Lamont at last, and he succeeds in getting on board another ship, the John Appleton, whale ship, of New Bedford, Captain Isaac Taylor commander: not, however, without a desperate struggle to get away from his dark relations.

MARTIN GUERRE.

In the little town of Artigues, in the district of Rieux, there lived, about the middle of the sixteenth century, a young couple, about whom the neighbours whispered most wonderful stories. Bertrande Rols, a girl of great beauty, had been married at the early age of little more than ten years (as was customary in those parts), to Martin Guerre, who was not much older. No children resulted from the marriage for some years, and it was universally believed that the young people had been bewitched. Their friends and relations advised all sorts of things to deliver them from the charm under which they were supposed to be suffering. But, in despite of consecrated cakes, masses, and holy wafers, held and given by the priests of the district, the enchantment continued. Bertrande's relations and friends strongly advised her to sue for a divorce, and to marry some one else. But the young wife was as virtuous as she was beautiful, was devotedly attached to her husband, and would not hear of a separation. At last, after eight or nine years, when the young couple were about twenty, Bertrande gave birth to a boy, who was christened Sanxi. Shortly after the birth of the child, Martin Guerre was induced to misappropriate some corn belonging to his father, who, though of Biscayan origin, farmed lands in Artigues. The robbery was discovered, and Martin, fearing his father's anger, left the place. No one, not even his wife, could find out whither he had gone. For eight years, no tidings were heard of him. Meantime, his father died, apparently without any ill feeling against his absent son, for he did not disinherit him. Peter Guerre, brother of the deceased, managed the property left to Martin, and drew the rents.

Bertrande during these eight years lived in strict retirement. Suddenly the news was spread that Martin Guerre had returned. The fact was not to be denied. One day Martin, who was certainly somewhat changed during the eight years he had been absent, appeared by the side of his delighted wife, and was warmly welcomed by the neighbours; they all recognised him by his features and stature. He gossiped about old times, on adventures which had befallen himself, and on many of his old freaks when a boy. Martin Guerre's four sisters hailed him as their brother, and Uncle Peter acknowledged him to be his nephew. He took possession of Bertrande's house, where he in-

stalled himself as Bertrande's husband. Two children were born to them, one of whom died an infant.

Who could entertain a doubt that the new comer was the real Martin Guerre? Yet a most extraordinary report was spread in Artigues. A soldier from Rochefort, who by chance visited Artigues, publicly declared that the real Martin Guerre, with whom he was well acquainted, was in Flanders; at St. Laurent he had lost a leg by a cannon-ball, and had a wooden one; consequently the man with two sound legs must be an impostor. Yet who had the right, on the simple word of an unknown soldier, to question the identity of a man whom both wife and relations had acknowledged? This stroller might have an ulterior object in view, in spreading such a report, and his statements must be fabulous. For, if Martin Guerre were elsewhere, why did he not claim his inheritance? Some sensation was, however, created when it was found that Bertrande had sent for a solicitor to take down the soldier's statement.

Another circumstance shortly afterwards attracted the attention of the neighbours to the Guerre family. Between Uncle Peter and his nephew there were violent disputes. It is true, Uncle Peter had handed over his nephew's property to him, but he postponed from day to day the rendering an account of his trusteeship. Martin pressed him hard; he brought an action against him, and they became inveterate enemies. The uncle was even accused of having attempted Martin's life; in a fit of anger one day he knocked him down, and was about to hit him with an iron bar, when Bertrande rushed forward and preserved her husband. Peter now thought only of revenge.

A dispute with one Jean of Escarbœuf led to Martin's imprisonment. The uncle took advantage of the opportunity to endeavour to persuade Bertrande to leave her husband. He said he was an impostor, whom she ought to turn out of doors; he even threatened to have them both turned out of house and home, if she lived with him any longer. But the wife was not to be intimidated, and firmly declared that no one could know her husband better than herself. If he were not her husband, he was the devil in her husband's skin. The exasperated uncle had no better success with the other relations. Jean Loze, a man of considerable property, and consul at Palhos—to whom Peter applied for a loan of money to institute proceedings against the presumed impostor—declared that he recognised Martin, and declined to advance any money to do him harm; if he did advance money, it would be to defend him against his calumniators.

The uncle's attempts seemed to have failed completely, and Martin having been released from his short incarceration, was received back with open arms by his wife. To the astonishment of every one, on the following morning Martin was forcibly taken from his house by the uncle and his four sons-in-law, all armed, and was lodged in the prison at Rieux. The re-

port accredited was, that this was done at the request of Bertrande herself, who had at last found out that her supposed husband was an impostor.

Respecting Bertrande's own feelings and belief, the greatest uncertainty prevailed. She now seemed tortured with doubt about Martin's identity, but more inclined towards him than otherwise. She had given her uncle the authority to take the step he had taken, but probably in consequence of his threats of what he would do if she refused; for, scarcely had Martin been lodged in prison, when she sent him clothes, clean linen, and money.

This extraordinary trial came off before the Court of Justice at Rieux.

The plaintiffs pleaded that the accused was not the missing Martin Guerre, but was a certain Arnold Tilh, commonly called Pansette, born at Sagias. They denounced him as an impostor, amenable to all the rigours of the law.

Martin's defence was simple and natural. Having left his father's house in consequence of having offended him, he had wandered about from place to place; and he mentioned by name many persons in whose society he had been. He had enlisted, and served in the French army nearly eight years; had then deserted to Spain; and, having heard that he could return home without danger, had done so. On reaching Artigues, he was immediately recognised by the inhabitants, who, with rejoicings, accompanied him to his wife's house. His wife had received him without the slightest doubt or hesitation. His relations and friends, including his four sisters, threw themselves into his arms, and embraced him with tears, before he had narrated his adventures. If his wife now, apparently, were among his accusers, after living three years with him without the slightest compunction, it was clear that this could not be an act of her own free will, but must be the result of threats and intimidations on the part of the uncle and his partisans. The motives were revenge and self-interest. The well-known violent disputes between him and his wicked relative offered him the best means of defence. He therefore prayed that Bertrande should be released from the power exercised over her by her uncle; and that, to shield her against his malicious influence, she should be placed under the care of some disinterested persons. This was granted. A species of clerical edict was issued, threatening excommunication against all persons cognisant of the affair who did not come forward and tell the truth.

Every investigation made by the authorities tended to corroborate the statements of the accused as to the towns he had visited and the persons he had mixed with. In cross-examination, his replies were quite satisfactory. He talked without any hesitation of his native place, his father, his mother, his marriage, the priest who had married him to Bertrande; he even remembered how some of the guests at the marriage were dressed. On the marriage night, some of the young men of the place had

given him a serenade. He mentioned their names.

Bertrande corroborated every circumstance. There was only one important point upon which Martin had been silent—the story that they were bewitched. On being pressed, Martin related every circumstance connected with that rumour, almost in the very words in which Bertrande had already stated them on paper.

No less than one hundred and fifty witnesses were examined as to whether they recognised the accused as Martin Guerre, or Arnold Tilh.

Sixty of these witnesses declared that the resemblance between the two men was so extraordinary, that they could not make a solemn declaration either way. Thirty or forty declared that they unhesitatingly believed the accused to be Martin Guerre, whom they had known from his boyhood. They recognised him by certain marks upon his person, as well as by his face and figure. Fifty witnesses declared that the accused was Arnold Tilh, of Sagias, whom they had known from a child!

Martin's son, young Sanxi, was confronted with the accused; there was no resemblance between them. On the other hand, the four sisters Guerre were as like him as one egg is to another.

The judges of Rieux pronounced that the accused was convicted of imposture; and sentenced him to be executed and quartered. The accused appealed to a higher tribunal, and the High Court of Justice of Toulouse ordered a new trial.

Investigations were now set on foot respecting Bertrande's character, with a view to induce her to make a full declaration of everything within her knowledge. They were all in her favour. Every witness bore testimony to her high moral character and virtuous conduct. It seemed impossible that so innocent a woman could have lived for three years with a man as his wife, unless she was firmly convinced that he was her husband. For eight years, in the full bloom of youth and beauty, she had patiently waited, had declined every inducement to sever the already half-broken band of matrimony and contract a second marriage, had remained faithful to her absent husband. On being confronted with the accused, she became confused. In a cheerful voice he asked her to tell the whole truth; she must swear whether he was or was not her real husband; if she denied him, life had no longer any charm for him.

Bertrande could only reply that she could not swear it.

The view taken by the new judge of this reply was favourable to the accused. Bertrande had been so importuned and frightened that she had reluctantly given her adhesion to the accusation of her uncle; she had committed an error from fear and weakness; and now, fear of punishment prevented her from retracting. Moreover, the open countenance of the accused, and his calm and collected replies when confronted with Bertrande and the uncle—who trembled and were greatly discomposed—had a

powerful effect upon the jury, who fancied they saw evidences of falsehood in the demeanour of Peter Guerre.

Thirty witnesses were again examined. Some swore to the identity of Martin Guerre, others to the identity of Arnold Tilh.

According to the depositions of all who had known this Arnold Tilh, he was a wild young fellow, a gambler, blasphemer, thief, and clever swindler. Witnesses beyond suspicion, owned that the resemblance between him and Martin Guerre was extraordinary, and that a casual observer could not distinguish one from the other. Martin Guerre was, however, somewhat taller and darker, and had a stooping gait. Arnold Tilh was of stronger build, and held his head upright. The latter description was in keeping with the personal appearance of the accused at the bar. But he also had, as advanced by Martin's witnesses, the mark of a swelling on his face, and a scar over the right eyebrow. The evidence as to these marks was, however, contradictory. Some said the left eyebrow, others declared that the mark on Martin's face was larger, some that it was less. No two witnesses could agree. Among the accusations brought against the prisoner was one of witchcraft; and the High Court of Toulouse, and its Councillor Coras who belonged to the Reformed Church, laid stress upon it. By the black art the accused had acquired the knowledge of every circumstance connected with Martin Guerre's history.

Bertrande was not for a moment suspected of complicity with the imposture, or of having been bewitched by him. Her conduct throughout proved that she was an amiable timid woman, incapable of forming any strong resolution to do harm to any one. It was considered that it required an immense effort on the part of a virtuous woman to declare publicly that she had mistaken her husband's identity; such a declaration would imply the illegitimacy of her children. This was taken as an explanation of her half retraction and anxiety. Among the witnesses who solemnly declared the accused to be Arnold Tilh, some had had dealings with him, or had acted as witnesses to transactions with him. They showed documents bearing his signature, but these were no proofs against a man who disowned them. On the other hand, an innkeeper of a town in the vicinity deposed that, under the seal of confidence, the prisoner had confessed to him that he was Arnold Tilh, but that Martin Guerre had made him his heir. Two other witnesses stated that when they wished to speak to him he had made them a sign to be silent, and that one of them had received a present from him. It was further stated that Martin Guerre was a good swordsman and wrestler, and that the accused was not. Martin Guerre was originally from Biscaya. The accused was ignorant of the Basque dialect, except a few words which he occasionally introduced into his conversation. The shoemaker formerly employed by Martin Guerre swore that the number of his last was

12, while that of the prisoner was 9, and that within his whole experience he had never known the feet of a healthy grown-up man to increase in size. An uncle of Tilh by the maternal side, at once recognised the accused as his nephew. He burst into tears when he saw his nephew in chains. The judges attached great weight to this involuntary confession. Had there been no counter-witnesses, these positive declarations might have been conclusive against the accused. But the witnesses in his favour remained unshaken; they again and again declared that he was Martin Guerre. What gave more importance to their declarations was, that they had known Martin Guerre since he was a child, whilst the former witnesses had simply had dealings with him. As to what had become of Arnold Tilh, no trace could be found. The four chief witnesses for the accused had at once recognised him as their brother. No cross-examination could shake their belief. Could it be supposed that all four were deceived by a resemblance? If it had even been so at first, the present trial must have drawn all their attention to the man, anew. Should even sisterly affection have deceived *them*, was it likely that the husbands of two of them should be equally deceived? They also recognised the accused as their brother-in-law.

Uncle Peter Guerre, the chief accuser, was unwittingly an indirect witness in favour of the prisoner. He himself had at once recognised him as his nephew, had handed him over his inheritance without hesitation, and it was only when a dispute about the trusteeship arose that he challenged his identity. It was presumed that, from revenge, he had got up several plots against Martin. Were not, then, his motives to ruin him, self-evident? Bertrande's whole conduct was surely in the prisoner's favour. On his return he addressed all his former friends by their christian names. Was it possible for the most skilful impostor not to have betrayed himself? What study such an impostor must have previously undergone! And who could have helped him? If not Bertrande—who was above all suspicion—it could only have been Martin Guerre. The number of years of absence explained a certain change of aspect. The boy had filled out, had become stouter, had served in the army, drill had made him more erect, he had grown a beard, and it made some alteration in his face. Martin Guerre had, firstly, two double teeth in the upper jaw; secondly, a scar on the forehead; thirdly, a misshapen nail on the forefinger of his right hand; fourthly, three warts on the same hand, and one on the little finger; fifthly, a mole over the left eye. All these marks were on the accused. That the boy Sanxi should not resemble him, was of no account; taking into consideration the striking resemblance to the four sisters. That he did not understand the Basque dialect, proved nothing. He was only two years old when he left that district, and no one could prove that he spoke the dialect in the days before his flight. Even Arnold

Tilh's disreputable character was in favour of the accused. During the three years he had lived with Bertrande, he had appreciated the love of an amiable woman, and had given her no cause for complaint. Was it possible that the natural inclinations of a desperate man could be so suddenly changed?

The judges were in the greatest perplexity. A favourable verdict was expected. A contrary verdict would involve the destruction of a happy home, and the illegitimacy of a child.

But now, a new witness suddenly made his appearance—a far more important witness than any of the others—a witness against the accused, and at the same time an accuser—a man with a wooden leg, calling himself Martin Guerre the real, the only Martin Guerre of Artigues, the husband of Bertrande of Rols.

The first-suspected-to-be-false Martin Guerre had already given the judges so much trouble and anxiety, that they received the second pretender with extreme disgust, and ordered him to be arrested. The suspicion against him was in some measure justified. The declaration of the soldier, and the step taken by Bertrande, had become public. According to the soldier's statement, the real Martin Guerre had a wooden leg. Not a bad inducement to an adventurer with a wooden leg, to try for the disputed place, in which another had already succeeded so well. It was even assumed that Uncle Peter might have set up this new Martin Guerre. Moreover, the wooden-legged man, instead of going first to the town, had presented himself at once in court, with a document in his hand, in which he set forth all his civil claims, and demanded his restitution in his former position and in all his rights. This smacked of a conspiracy to entangle the case still more. The replies of the wooden-legged man did not weaken the suspicions against him. They were, certainly, precise and minute; but they agreed exactly with what the first claimant had declared.

Before the witnesses were called, the two Martins Guerre were confronted. The first did not for a moment lose his presence of mind. He maintained that the new claimant was an impostor suborned by his supposed uncle, and that he knew nothing at all about him. With the confidence of a man conscious of being in the right, he declared that he was ready to suffer the most ignominious death, if he did not succeed in convincing the judges of the conspiracy against him. A violent altercation ensued between the two. Though the wooden-legged man was never in want of a reply, he at times lost his presence of mind and firmness, whereas the other remained perfectly calm and collected. New witnesses were sought out. Arnold Tilh had brothers. They were cited to appear; but neither promises nor threats could induce them to do so. The judges did not press them further, as the life of a brother might be at stake.

The next step was to confront the new comer with the Guerre family. The elder sister was admitted first. She looked for some time steadily

at the new comer. She then threw herself on his breast, sobbing, and kissing him; called him by his name, and entreated his forgiveness. She had been deceived. Her brother was equally moved, kissed her, and forgave her. A similar scene occurred with the three other sisters. The witnesses gradually agreed that their judgment had been misled, and that this was the real Martin Guerre. All that now remained, was to confront Bertrande with the new claimant. She stopped at the threshold as soon as she saw the unexpected man, and evinced sudden and powerful emotion. She burst into tears, threw herself at his feet, stretched out her arms, and, sobbing loudly, she begged his forgiveness. He was her lost husband, the real Martin Guerre. No more evidence was required. The mystery was held to be solved. Even the impostor saw that the game was up, and, without being put to the torture, made full confession of his guilt.

On the 12th of September, 1560, the High Court of Toulouse passed sentence on Arnold Tilh. The sentence of the court of Rieux was quashed, as execution with the sword had been decreed: which was not adjudged to low criminals. Arnold Tilh was sentenced, because he had assumed the name, rank, and person, of Martin Guerre, claimed his wife, appropriated and spent her property, and contaminated her marriage, to go on his knees from the church door of Artigues, in his shirt, with uncovered head and bare feet, a rope round his neck, and a burning taper in his hand, asking pardon of God, the king, the authorities, Martin Guerre, and Bertrande of Rols; then to be led through all the streets of the town, and finally to be hanged and strangled in front of Martin Guerre's house, and his body then to be publicly burnt. The sentence was carried out on the 16th of September. Under the gallows erected in front of Martin Guerre's house, Arnold Tilh implored the forgiveness of Martin and of his wife.

According to Arnold Tilh's statement made before his death, he and Martin Guerre had served together in the army, sharing the same tent. Martin had repeatedly related all his affairs to him, and every circumstance connected with his parents, his home, his wife, his friends, his flight; in a drunken fit he had even told him the various circumstances of his marriage. On his return home, Tilh had been repeatedly addressed as Martin Guerre. He had at first treated it as a joke, but afterwards resolved to turn it to account. He made a study of it, and, thus prepared, came to Artigues.

It is pretty obvious that this sharp impostor must have been greatly assisted by the dulness of his dupes. Nor is it reasonably to be doubted that they themselves originated the remembrance of an immense number of small circum-

stances, which remembrance they afterwards ascribed to him, and he readily appropriated. It does not appear that, when he began to be seriously mistrusted, any of the hesitating people about him tried him with a few pretended recollections of occurrences that had never happened. The neglect of so simple an expedient is expressive of the general level of acuteness at Artigues in those days. The case is so famous that we present it from the original records; but it appears to us to be far more remarkable for the simplicity of the believers, and for the extraordinary personal resemblance (*in detail*) between the real man and the false, than for any extraordinary ability on the part of the latter. If the latter had been a man with a most wonderful memory—as he must have been if his last statement were the whole truth—he would surely, at one time or other, have given some previous proof of it; but no such proof is forthcoming against him, though the prosecution inquires closely into his former character. One would say, too, that a man with a most wonderful memory would have picked up for so special a purpose more than “a few words” of the Basque dialect.

On the whole, we take the main interest of this well-known case to lie in its being a leading example of the extent to which the believers in a deception become its innocent accomplices. Two or three London seasons ago, we heard much—greatly too much—of the praises of a certain male “Medium” who raised Spirits at so much a sitting. Under a modest incognito, we obtained an appointment from this gentleman, on payment of certain guineas; and then repaired to M. ROBIN, the excellent conjuror at that time at the Egyptian Hall, and begged the favour of his accompanying us to the other world. “Willingly,” said M. Robin. “But observe. I know my art, and I know what this man can do. He can do nothing unless you help him. His visitors really do his tricks, not he. No plan or test is necessary. Tell him not a word, make no gesture of assent or dissent, guide him by no expression of face, and he will do absolutely nothing.” The visit was made, and he did nothing. In offering a sort of forlorn apology for his dismal failure when we took the liberty of remarking on it at the close of the proceedings, said the discomfited Medium, indicating M. Robin who had sat on his right hand: “But at least the Spirits did spell the name of Valentine, which was written by this gentleman.”—“Ah!” said M. Robin, checking him with the politest little action of the hand in the world. “O yes. Permit me. Bah! Else why did I sit so close to you, and let you of a purpose look over my shoulder, you know!”

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MABEL'S PROGRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

BOOK III.

CHAPTER VII. NEWS FROM HAMMERHAM.

RETURNING from the theatre, they passed the open door of the kitchen on their way into the house, and Mrs. Walton looked in to say good evening to old Joe, who was sitting by the turf fire in a great chair covered with patchwork, and smoking a long pipe.

"Good evening, Mr. Bonny, how are you to-night?"

"Wa-all, Missus Walton," responded the old man in a slow growl, "I don't know as there's much the matter with me, 'ceptin' as I've growed old. My old carcase ain't good for nothin' now, but to set still from mornin' till night in this here darned old cheer."

Joe Bonny never regarded the individual whom he was addressing, nor even turned his head, but habitually uttered his remarks in the manner of a soliloquy, and was so slow, so gruff, and so inarticulate, as to be nearly unintelligible to strangers.

"Ah, sure, Joe," said Biddy, bustling cheerfully about the kitchen, "don't be afther re-joinin' now! Ye've done yer share of work in this world; can't ye be aisy and rest comfortable in the evenin' of yer days?"

"Yah!" snarled Joe. "Rest! There niver warn't a Paddy yet as I ever heerd on, as wasn't up to takin' any amount o' that there. They thinks a Englishman just lunatic for wantin' to do anything else in the 'varsal world but rest!"

A significant commentary on Joe's speech was supplied by old Bridget's busy activity. The sweet-tempered old soul applied herself to the preparation of her lodgers' supper, now and then stopping to alter the position of the cushion behind her husband's back, or to put his tobacco-box within more convenient reach of his hand, or to pile a few fresh turfs on the hearth.

"Don't you find it warm enough, to do without fire here in the evening?" said Mrs. Walton, turning to leave the kitchen.

"I do, ma'am," answered Biddy; "but Joe likes the bit of foire, the craythur. Sure he can't move about to set his blood cirkylatin',

and it does be company for him when I'm obliged to lave him alone."

During supper Biddy lingered in the sitting-room, on one excuse or the other, to express her delight at the performance, and to retail all the favourable criticisms which Teddy Molloy had brought home.

"Don't sit up for us, any longer, Biddy," said Mrs. Walton. "I am sure you must be very tired."

"Oh, sorra a bit, ma'am," responded the old woman, cheerfully. "But I'll wish yez all good night, an' pleasant dhraems, an'—Arrah, see there now!" she exclaimed suddenly, "what a baste I am to be forgettin' the letther, and me having it in my pocket all the time!"

"A letter, Biddy?"

"A letther, no less, ma'am, and 'tis for the young lady, God bless her. Sure it came not more than foive minutes afther ye was gone to the theatre, an' I tuk it from Dennis the post-man my own self, and put it in my pocket; and sure I give no more thought to it from that moment to this, so I didn't! There it is, miss." Biddy handed to Mabel a thick letter with the Hammerham postmark.

"No bad news, dear, I hope?" said Aunt Mary, with a searching glance at Mabel's face as she read her letter.

"Oh no, aunt, thank you. Mamma and Dooley are well. And mamma tells me that a—

—a friend of mine is going to be married."

"Halloa, Mabel!" cried Jack, in his random way, saying what came uppermost. "I hope it isn't a case of 'she never told her love,' and lettin' what's his name, like the thingummy, eat up the damask roses, eh? You look quite tragic. Is he false, Mabel, fickle, faithless?"

"How silly you are, Jack!" said Mabel, flushing crimson. "The friend who is going to be married, is a lady, an old school-fellow of mine, Miss Augusta Charlewood."

"Any relation to the gentleman of whose kindness little Corda speaks so much?" asked Mrs. Walton.

"His sister."

There was a little shade over Mabel.

"You are tired, dear child," said her aunt. "Go to bed."

Mabel rose, shook hands with Jack, and kissed her aunt in silence.

"Shut your door, Mabel, so that I may not disturb you when I come into my room. I am

not going to bed for an hour yet. I have to recover a part for to-morrow night. Good night, dear. I don't know how it is," continued Mrs. Walton, when Mabel had left the room, "but it always seems to me that a letter from Hazlehurst puts her out of spirits. And yet she is very eager to get them, poor child."

"I think Aunt Earnshaw bothers her with complaints; she was always selfish," said Jack: who had never quite forgiven what he called Mrs. Philip's bad behaviour to his mother.

Mabel went into her own little chamber, and shut the door of communication between it and her aunt's room. The night was warm and soft, and Mabel opened the little old-fashioned lattice window that looked across a small flagged yard into some gardens beyond, where a couple of tall elms stood up dark against the sky. She unbound and brushed out her hair, and prepared herself for bed, glancing every now and then at her letter. She had laid it on the little table beside the looking-glass; but she did not open it again, or read it, until she had finished her toilet for the night. It seemed as though she desired to devote herself very quietly to its perusal; for when she was ready to step into bed she wrapped a dressing-gown about her, and seating herself at the table, took up the letter. But even then she did not open it at once, but sat stroking her forehead with the cover in a musing irresolute way. At last, with a decided movement, she took it out of its envelope, and, beginning at the first page, read it through steadily, once more.

Mrs. Saxeby, as the reader knows by this time, was not one of those people who can "suffer and be strong." It was her nature and her habit to cry out, when she was hurt in either mind or body: not with any passionate or unbecoming violence, but with a soft plaintive lady-like bemoaning of her fate, and demand for sympathy. And it was very difficult for Mrs. Saxeby to believe that people who *didn't* cry out, suffered at all.

After the drive in Miss Charlewood's pony-carriage, she had sat down to relieve her mind by pouring out some portion of her own melancholy and low spirits on Mabel. Not that this was what she told herself she meant to do. "Of course Mabel will like to hear the Hammerham news. I must tell her of Augusta's engagement. Oh dear me, dear me! No one knows what an effort it is for me to write sometimes!" That is what Mrs. Saxeby said to herself.

So, Mabel read her mother's letter steadily through. The first part related small particulars of her own health and Dooley's, of their daily life, and of the garden and orchard, and dumb creatures—not forgetting the famous pig. Then came the kernel, the real bitter almond for whose envelopement all the husk of the letter had been constructed. "On Tuesday, Penelope Charlewood called in the forenoon, and brought the pony-carriage, in which she asked us to take a drive. I was a little unwilling at first to go. But it was a fine day, and I knew dear Julian would enjoy it, and

Miss Charlewood was very friendly and urgent, so at last I consented. I had not seen any of the family from Bramley Manor for three weeks, and Miss Charlewood excused and accounted for their long absence by giving me a piece of news. Augusta is going to be married very shortly. Her fiancé is a clergyman named Dawson, belonging to an Irish family. But Penelope said the young couple would live close to Eastfield, which is (for rich people who do not care what they spend in travelling) quite like being in Hammerham. When *my* daughter was in Eastfield it seemed a long way off. But Mr. Charlewood is one of the fortunate ones of this world. Mrs. Dawson—the mother of the bridegroom elect—is staying at the Manor on a visit. And also his cousin, a Miss O'Brien, an Irish girl. *Very* handsome and dashing and clever. She and Clement Charlewood take long rides together. She is a *splendid* horsewoman. And, from what Penelope said, I can see very plainly that she is making violent love to Clement. In fact, I infer that the whole thing is as good as settled. I must say I felt very downcast and wretched when I returned home after the drive. It did seem as if everything and everybody that I cared for were drifting, drifting away from me. After all that has passed I *did* think that Clement would not have consoled himself so very soon. How fickle and selfish men are! But I don't believe he can care for this Miss O'Brien one quarter as much as he did for you. He is just dazzled and flattered, that is all. O Mabel, Mabel! how I wish sometimes that—but of course it is no use wishing; I know that very well; and you, who have new scenes, new faces, and new occupations, can scarcely imagine how bitter *my* regrets are sometimes. One thing is quite certain: marry whom you will I shall never, never be able to feel for him as I could have done for Clement Charlewood. It is sometimes fairly incomprehensible to me how you could *help* loving him. But I suppose there is no accounting for these things, and it is useless to try."

The letter rambled on in this strain for some page and a half longer; but contained nothing more which it imports the reader to know for the understanding of my story, except the few following words, added as a postscript:

"Walter joined his regiment a fortnight ago. They say he will be sent to Dublin. I wonder if you will chance to see him! He is to be at the wedding, of course, if he can get leave, which they do not doubt."

Mabel re-folded the letter elaborately; taking especial care to keep the paper in its original creases, and pressing and smoothing them with her hand. One would have thought, to watch her, that her attention was quite absorbed in her task. But in truth she did not even see what she was doing, except in a mechanical way, from which her mind was absent.

"Poor mamma!" thought Mabel. "I am so sorry for poor mamma!" Then her thoughts,—like a flock of wild birds that wheel and turn and hover round the spot to which their desires

tend, afraid to settle on the feeding-ground, and yet circling in still narrowing rounds until they alight at last,—fluttered capriciously hither and thither about the main point of interest in her mother's letter, without at first fastening on it. She pictured to herself Dooley and her mother seated in Miss Charlewood's little carriage. The country road that she knew so well; the look of the cottage with its climbing roses coming into bloom; Penelope's hard resolute face and keen bright eyes. Then Augusta; what was her future husband like? It was odd he should be Irish. And that cousin,—that Miss O'Brien,—was she—? Ah, then the fluttering fancy furled its wings and dropped and brooded! What was this? This dull numb feeling at the heart, that was more like a pain of which we are dimly conscious in our sleep, than real waking suffering? What was amiss? What had she lost or gained since an hour ago, that made this strange difference in her out-look on the world? "I told him that day at Eastfield," she murmured dreamily, "that he would find some one who would drive the thought of me from his mind; or at least leave me only a humble niche there, that he could look on with calm friendliness. Yes: I knew it. I said so. And he was so sure,—so fixed,—so certain that he could never change or waver! I hope she is worthy of him. He is good. I am very glad—No!" she cried suddenly, pressing her hands upon her hot brow, suffused all at once with a deep crimson flush. "No, no, no; I am *not* glad. How poor I am in my own eyes! How mean, selfish, pitiful; but I won't lie to myself. I am *not* glad. I am sorry. *I* who gave him so much pain,—*I* who was so unbending with him, and repulsed his love so firmly,—*I* am grudging him this happiness at the bottom of my heart. What if he has forgotten his fancy quickly? Ought I not to rejoice that the hurt is not so deep a one as he thought? I could not love him as he wished, but I told him proudly that I should always be his faithful, grateful friend. I was so lofty and secure of myself, and now—For a miserable slight to my self-love, I cannot be glad in my friend's gladness! O Mabel, Mabel! are you vain and envious and mean? I did not know you to be so, Mabel Earnshaw. And now that I see you as you are, I am astonished and ashamed."

The scalding tears ran down her flushed cheeks slowly.

She went to the open window and leaned out. The air was still and sweet, and the clear dark sky seemed to soothe the throbbing of her temples. There was no sound save faint snatches of a mournful Irish song that came now and then, softened and sweetened by the distance, from some ship at anchor in the river.

Mabel set her thoughts to look forward into the future. Into the career she hoped to make, the toils and fears and pleasures of her art. She thought of her uncle's story of the Arabian princess, who shut her ears to the distracting voices, and neither faltered nor looked back.

"Ah, that looking back!" said Mabel to her-

self. "That is fatal. I may turn when I am at the top, but not yet. And then, too," she said, wiping her wet eyes with a child-like half-sad smile, "the view is always so much wider and better from the summit!"

CHAPTER VIII. LINGO IS CARRIED AWAY BY HIS FEELINGS.

THE first two or three weeks of the theatrical season at Kilclare were very successful. The company advanced and secured themselves in public favour. Mr. Wilfred J. Percival and Miss Lydia St. Aubert were the "bright particular stars" of the tragic portions of the performances; whilst comedy and farce were supported by the lively exertions of Mr. Snell, the low comedian, Mrs. Walton, and Miss Annette Moffatt. The latter young lady had been christened Ann, and commonly called Nancy up to twelve years of age; but after that time she was sent to school in France, and returned to her native country as Annette. Miss Moffatt prided herself upon her vocal accomplishments, which, to say truth, were not of a very high order. She had a shrill weak soprano voice, very uncertain in intonation; but she would rattle off an arch song, or give forth a plaintive ballad with so much aplomb, and such an evident conviction that she was singing to absolute perfection, that people began to believe she was a charming vocalist in spite of their ears. Miss Moffatt chiefly professed what she called "the Vestris business;" and the mention in the playbill of the character which Miss Moffatt was to play, was invariably followed by the words, "with songs." And so much was this a matter of course, that when on one occasion Miss Moffatt was about to display the versatility of her talents in pantomime, the printer, from the sheer force of habit, put into the playbill the surprising announcement, "Lisette, a dumb girl (with songs), by Miss Annette Moffatt."

The manager's daughter was very amiable and condescending to Mabel for some time. She was too well satisfied with herself to be easily jealous of Mabel's good looks or graceful manner, and the latter was too insignificant a member of the company as yet to call forth anything like professional jealousy. "Miss M. A. Bell's" histrionic efforts had so far been confined to very small parts of a few lines; and in these—though terribly nervous on the occasion of first having to speak on the stage—she had acquitted herself in so satisfactory a manner as to give promise of better things. Her first success, however, was achieved in the character of that melodramatic confidante whose high-flown speeches she had declared she should be ashamed to utter. When she came to "My lord, I quail not at your threats," &c., and defied Mr. Copestake as the wicked tyrant, she was worked up to such a pitch of desperation by the combined feelings of nervousness, a struggling sense of absurdity, and a strong desire to produce something of the effect which her aunt (who was watching anxiously at the wing) had told her might be, and ought to be

produced, that she uttered the speech with a kind of breathless vehemence, that was quite thrilling. And when at its conclusion she burst into a storm of real tears, and rushed off the stage, her exit was followed by a round of very hearty and genuine applause.

"Bravo, Miss Bell!" exclaimed Mr. Harcourt Howard, the walking gentleman, as Mabel came off at the front entrance, where he was standing. "Bravo! You've waked 'em up, by Jove. I shall begin to think you're not such a novice as you say, after all, if you go on in this way."

"Pooh!" snapped out old Jerry Shaw, as soon as Mr. Howard had turned away. "Trash. Nonsense. Novice? Of course. The child was frightened, and lost her head. Forgot to be Miss M. A. Bell for two minutes. That's the secret. Balderdash!"

Mabel could not help laughing in the midst of her excitement. "Indeed, that's true, Mr. Shaw," said she, wiping her eyes. "There isn't a bit of credit due to me, I'm sure. I was inspired by despair."

"Don't I know it? Of course. And, look you, though that was very well for once, it won't do to give way to it. If you want to do anything as an actress, you must learn to calculate your effects beforehand. 'Si vis me flere'—ah, you don't understand Latin, do ye? No more do I. I did once. But that's long ago. I put it away with—with a good many other things one fine morning. And if you like to call me a confounded idiot for my pains, ye're welcome. However, what I was going to say is this: it's all very well to say that to make me weep you must first grieve, and it's true, partly. But you mustn't let your emotions run away with you on the stage. Keep 'em well in hand. Make them caper and curvet and bring the people's hearts in their mouths, as the circus-riders do, when they make their beast *rare* and plunge with a sly touch of the knee or twitch of the bridle, and they sitting safe and steady all the while as if they were in a rocking-chair."

"Thank you, Mr. Shaw."

"Tush! Thank me? Ye're laughing at me in your sleeve for a prosing old fool, I'll go bail."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Shaw," returned Mabel, drawing herself up, and looking full at him. "You are quite mistaken. I was listening to what you said with attention, and was grateful for your hint, as I hope I shall always be for any well-meant advice from an experienced artist."

The old man looked at her doubtfully for an instant, and then, by a sudden impulse, he lifted the grotesque stage bonnet he wore from his head, with a gesture that seemed to reveal in one moment a history of long-forgotten days, so full was it of high-bred old-fashioned courtesy.

"I believe you," said he, "and I sincerely crave your pardon."

From that time forward, Mr. Shaw—influenced, according to his own account, by Lingo's mature and explicitly conveyed opinion—seemed to attach himself to Mabel in a way in which he had never been known to behave to

any human being within the memory of his stage comrades. Not that he was gentle or even civil in his speech to her; but he watched her progress, in every part that was entrusted to her to play, with unwearied attention. He would even sometimes enter into long discussions on the dramatic art. Putting forth quaint, queer theories of his own; and displaying an unexpected amount of reading. For he would quote long passages, not only from Shakespeare, but from the earlier dramatists, for Mabel's edification. And the contrast was very singular between the old man's evident appreciation of their beauty, and his utter inability to embody his own conception by voice or gesture; jerking out pathetic and impassioned speeches alike, with the same hard cracked voice and stifled brogue.

Amongst these people, and in these surroundings, Mabel worked out the first elements of her new profession. Attentive, indefatigable, docile to instruction—for Mabel's pride was in no way allied to vain presumption or over-weening self-conceit—the girl strove and studied to master the mechanical details of her business, without full command of which no player can achieve eminence.

"Your voice, and your face, and your figure are the tools you have to work with," said Jerry Shaw one day to her; "and you can't carve out your own ideas unless you've first learnt to handle your tools properly."

Out of the theatre Mrs. Walton and her family held little communication with the rest of the company. Indeed, social intercourse of any kind was nearly impossible in the press of constant occupation that took up Mabel's and her aunt's time. Jack, whose employment within the theatre was by no means so unremitting, took long solitary rambles, with a satchel, containing his colour-box and sketch-book, slung over his shoulders, and returned in the light summer evenings with a collection of charming studies from the rich banks of the Clare, and all the surrounding country, nearly as far as Ballyhacket in one direction, and the sea in another.

The only members of Mr. Moffatt's troupe who had access to Mrs. Walton's home were the Trescotts. Little Corda had become a devout worshipper of Mabel. In Corda's opinion there was no one so good or so beautiful or so clever, and the child was never weary of singing her praises.

Little as Mrs. Walton liked her father and brother, she yet could not bear to show any coldness to the gentle motherless little girl, to whom she felt that the society and example of Mabel were useful and valuable. Mr. Trescott, besides being leader and director of the small orchestra, was employed to arrange whatever incidental music might be needed, and to copy out the band parts. In this latter branch of his business Miss Moffatt gave him frequent employment, for she was wont to introduce all the new and popular songs of the day that she could find, into her parts, "lugging them in," as Mr. Harcourt Howard said, "by the head and

shoulders." Miss Moffatt's songs were a source of constant bitterness to Mr. Harcourt Howard; for, as he usually played her lover, it fell to his lot to stand and be sung to night after night, however ill-chosen for the business of the piece might be the moment that Miss Moffatt selected for bursting into song.

"If I could even make faces at her when she sings out of tune," said Mr. Harcourt Howard confidentially to his wife, "it would be some comfort; but I'm obliged to look as if I liked it."

Mr. Trescott, however, whose facial expression was of comparatively small importance, since he sat with his back to the audience, rather approved of Miss Moffatt's mania for singing; for the arrangement and copying of the band parts produced him some little emolument over and above his salary; but being so constantly occupied, he was very seldom able to visit Mrs. Walton's house. Alfred lounged in and out on various pretexts; to bring Cordelia to spend the afternoon; to fetch her away again; to make appointments with Jack for long rambles into the country—which appointments Alfred seldom kept, however—or to bring messages from his father to Mrs. Walton. He was always careful to inquire after her husband and Miss Janet, and gave many hints about looking forward to seeing a good deal of them in the winter, for he and his father were engaged by the Dublin manager for next season. Another circumstance which contributed to put young Trescott on an intimate footing in Mrs. Walton's family, was the following. In accordance with her aunt's express stipulation with Mr. Moffatt, Mabel was to have the part of Ophelia. Mr. Wilfred J. Percival had selected the play of Hamlet for his benefit night, which was rapidly approaching, and Mabel, thoroughly mistress of the words of the part, had yet to learn the tunes of the snatches of song interspersed through the mad scenes. "I know them well enough when I hear them, Mabel," said Aunt Mary, "but I can't attempt to sing them correctly enough to teach them to you."

In this dilemma Alfred Trescott, with much apparent diffidence, offered to bring his violin and play over the tunes to Mabel until she should have learned them by heart. Accordingly, he came to their lodgings nearly every day for a week, and made the little sitting-room over the shoemaker's shop ring with the sympathetic notes of his fiddle. Mabel had but little voice, but it was pure and fresh, and her ear was remarkably accurate. She caught from Alfred's violin, not only the notes that she had to sing, but also a certain accent and musically phrasing that gave a strong yet simple pathos to the quaint old melodies. Her aunt was delighted, and predicted a great success. Mabel was anxious and timid, but a few words that her aunt dropped braced her nerves and strengthened her resolution. She gathered that on the result of her performance of Ophelia might possibly depend her chance of being re-engaged by Mr. Moffatt for the following season, and even—who

could tell? perhaps an appearance at the Theatre Royal, Dublin, itself! and then she would earn a salary, however trifling, and then she would no longer be a burden on her aunt, and then—and then—she might send for mamma and Dooley! Oh, she *would* be strong and steady, and brave, and do the very best that was in her.

She thought of her part at every leisure moment, trying to form a clear conception of the hapless Danish girl, and to put herself, her own individuality, out of sight as much as possible in repeating the words. She and Corda would ramble out in the early morning whenever Mabel's presence was not required at rehearsal, accompanying Jack in his sketching excursions along the banks of the lovely river Clare, and then Mabel would pull her little well-worn Shakespeare out of her pocket, and, sitting down on a smooth green velvet patch of turf, would put the book into Corda's hand and desire her to "hear her through her part." A task of which Corda was not a little proud.

On one of these occasions, Alfred had joined the party as they sat on the river's bank under the trees, the two girls busy with Ophelia, and Jack absorbed in an endeavour to transfer to his sketch-book some wonderfully rich effects of colour in the rocks and foliage on the opposite side of the silver Clare.

"I was strolling past," said Alfred, "and caught a glimpse of pussy-cat's chesnut curls glinting through the green leaves. Now that I am here, may I stay, Miss Earnshaw?"

"May you stay? Surely you have a right to be here, if you choose."

"I have no right—or, at all event, no wish—to be troublesome to you by my presence."

He spoke with a sort of proud humility that touched Mabel.

"You don't trouble me at all, Mr. Trescott," she answered. "Corda and I will go on with Ophelia just the same. Won't we, Corda?"

The child, whose cheek was flushed with pleasure at the sight of her brother, smiled and nodded eagerly; and Mabel resumed:

"And I of ladies most deject and wretched,
That sucked the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh."

The young man threw himself on the grass beside his little sister, and clasping his hands above his head, listened in silence. The morning sun was shining down on the two young faces—Mabel's so earnest and absorbed, Corda's so smiling and eager. Little flickering lights and shadows from the leafy boughs above touched their glossy hair, and passed and changed as the breeze moved them. At their feet the river ran gurgling over its pebbly bed, and Mabel's pure voice rose thrillingly into the clear quiet air.

"Do you know Beethoven's Moonlight sonata for the pianoforte, Miss Earnshaw?" asked Alfred, when Mabel had ceased her recitation.

"I have heard it," answered Mabel, "and

exquisitely lovely it is. But my skill as a pianist never reached so far as to execute it fittingly."

"I think your Ophelia will be just like the first movement of the Moonlight sonata," said Alfred, turning his dark eyes upon her dreamily.

At that moment a short angry bark close to his ear made young Trescott spring to his feet with a stifled exclamation, which would have been a loud unmistakable oath but for Mabel's presence, and a fierce threatening gesture.

"Why, Lingo, Lingo—good dog—poor old fellow—don't you know us?" said Mabel, holding out her hand, into which Lingo immediately thrust his nose hastily, and then turned to bark at Alfred again.

"Oh, Mr. Shaw!" cried Mabel, as old Jerry appeared between the branches of underwood, "I'm so ashamed of Lingo this morning. He doesn't know his friends."

Mr. Shaw stood leaning with both hands upon a thick gnarled stick that he always carried, and gazing at the group before him with an inscrutable face.

The dog ran up to his master, and looking into his face, wagged his tail in an apologetic manner.

"Doesn't know his friends, Miss Bell? Faith, I never knew him make a mistake that way yet," said the old man, shortly. Then turning to Lingo with an air of confidential remonstrance, such as one might assume towards a friend whom one respected, but who had been hurried into an imprudence: "What did I say to ye," said he, "when we were talking together this morning before breakfast? You're too hasty and outspoken altogether."

Lingo ceased wagging his tail, stretched himself at his master's feet with his nose to the ground, and gave vent to a muffled sound that was neither a bark nor a growl, but something between the two.

"Of course," said Jerry Shaw, with imperturbable gravity, "so you remarked this morning, and I dare say you're right. But it don't do to say these things, and so I'd convince you if you weren't as obstinate as the deuce."

Alfred Trescott stood leaning against the trunk of a tree with folded arms, and contemplated Lingo and his master with a sidelong sinister scowl.

"I'll tell you what it is, Mr. Shaw," said the young man, "you ought to try and teach that dog of yours better manners. If it had been a stranger he'd come up to just now, tearing and barking, he might have chanced to get an ugly kick. People don't like to be startled in that way by a strange dog."

Jerry Shaw remained as motionless and unmoved whilst Alfred was speaking as though buried in a profound meditation that deadened his senses to all outward things. But, as soon as the young man held his peace, Mr. Shaw turned on him with surprising suddenness. "Oh, it's you, is it, Mr. Alfred Trescott?" said he, as though becoming aware of Alfred's presence for the first time. "I hope I see you well. Glad to find you abroad so early this fine morning. Nothing like early rising for young people. I've

been an early riser from my youth upward, and you can all see what it has done for me." And old Jerry laughed a short bitter abrupt laugh, that came out of his throat without causing a muscle of his face to move. "Good morning, Miss Bell. Take care of yourself. I've known it to be dangerous sometimes, sitting out on the turf."

"Dangerous?"

"You might—catch—cold," snapped out the old man, winding up with an unusually prolonged sniff. "Come along, Lingo. I suppose you have forgotten there's a ten o'clock call, sir, that you're settling yourself there for the day. Good morning to you, ladies and gentlemen. Oh, by the way," added Mr. Shaw, stopping short, and fixing his lacklustre grey eyes full on Alfred Trescott, "I would advise you to give up any idea of kicking Lingo. He mightn't like it. And I have a curious infirmity that perhaps I might as well mention. I always find kicking catching." And old Jerry Shaw tramped away through the crackling brushwood, with Lingo trotting soberly at his heels.

PLOT OF AN OLD PLAY.

ONCE upon a time there was a war between the two Greek states, Ætolia and Elis, and to none did this war bring greater grief than to the wealthy Ætolian, Hegio. His son, Philopolemus, had been made a prisoner and taken to Elis, and though other Ætolians as well as Hegio lost their sons in the conflict, his bereavement affected him with peculiar force, as many years before another son, a child of four years, had been carried off by a fugitive slave, and had not been since heard of, so that the second misfortune naturally reminded him of the first.

Fortune was, of course, not wholly on the side of Elis; many a promising youth of that country was captured and carried to Ætolia, and this circumstance led Hegio to practise a kind of commerce that was strangely at variance with his usual mode of life. In a word, he devoted himself to the purchase of captives from Elis, hoping that, by an exchange of prisoners, he might be able to effect the release of his beloved Philopolemus.

At the time when our story begins, Hegio had recently made a purchase of more than common importance. He had heard that a young noble from Elis, who held the highest rank in his own country, was a prisoner in Ætolia, and he lost no time in purchasing him, together with a slave, who, having followed his master to the war, was now his fellow-captive. Strange to say, Hegio, though he had bought exactly what he wanted, and was fairly dealt with by the vendor, was deceived in his purchase. Tyndarus, the slave, who had been brought up from childhood with Philocrates, the young noble, was devotedly attached to the latter, and, to afford him a better chance of obtaining liberty than he had reserved for himself, had proposed that they should change characters. The proposal having been accepted,

Hegio, while he received full value for his money, took the master for the slave, and the slave for the master.

Another person, who, from another cause, was deeply grieved by the capture of Philopolemus, was his friend Ergasilus, a gentleman of good family, engaging manners, and very limited means. Ergasilus, in fact, was one of those persons very common in Greek society, and by no means without representatives in modern times, who lived entirely on the bounty of their opulent acquaintances. When the town was full, his existence was merry enough; but when a cessation of public business caused an immigration of citizens into the country, he was so utterly without resources, that he would compare himself to a shell-fish forced to nourish itself with its own moisture. Now of all the young men of wealth whose table he frequented, Philopolemus had been most liberal, and, as good friends had generally become scarce, he felt that his only chance of subsistence was threatened. Nor was the sorrow of Ergasilus thoroughly selfish. He highly respected the father as well as the son, and thought the traffic in prisoners carried on by the former anything but worthy of his dignified station.

One day, when Ergasilus was lounging, in melancholy mood, near Hegio's town residence, the old gentleman came out absorbed in the cares of his new occupation. Being of a kindly disposition, he had just ordered his slaves to remove the heavy chains from the two captives to whom we have especially referred, and to substitute others of less weight. The captives might also be allowed to take a walk; but the slaves were enjoined to keep them in sight, for, as Hegio shrewdly observed, an escaped prisoner is like a wild beast, very hard to catch. He was now on his way to inspect some other captives, who had been previously bought, and were kept at his brother's house; and he had not proceeded many steps before he encountered Ergasilus, who did not scruple to confess his forlorn condition.

Although perfectly convinced that the grief of Ergasilus was caused more by the cessation of his meals than by the loss of his friend, Hegio could not refrain from sympathising with a man who was a sufferer through the same misfortune as himself. Half in joke, half in earnest, he told him that it was his birthday, and that if he liked he might come to supper, though he warned him, at the same time, that he must be content with vegetable diet. Ergasilus muttered that Hegio was more qualified to nurse the sick than to entertain guests of distinction, but he accepted the invitation nevertheless.

The slave to whose charge the two captives were confided, though it was his office to inflict corporal punishment on delinquents of his own condition, was by no means a hard-hearted creature, and even endeavoured to comfort his unhappy charges with philosophical discourse. If it was the will of the gods that they suffered this calamity, they were bound to submit. In their early life they had tasted the sweets of liberty; very good—they must now put up

with the consequences of their captivity, and, though the fortune of war had rendered them slaves, still, if they could only make their own will precisely correspond with that of their master, their condition might not be so intolerable, after all.

The consolatory power of discourses of this kind is seldom very great, nor did the words of the kindly jailer, uttered when he took them out for the walk permitted by Hegio, greatly cheer the heart of the noble Philocrates. However, they encouraged Tyndarus, whose condition was less changed than that of his master, to crave a small favour, which was that he and his fellow-captive should be allowed to converse a few moments apart. Their keeper, who had only to take care that they did not quit his sight, readily acceded to this request.

The desired opportunity of private conversation being obtained, Philocrates warned Tyndarus that the greatest circumspection was necessary, if they would not have their plans fail altogether. The task which each had imposed on himself, of sustaining the character of the other, was by no means light, and consequently must not be negligently performed. Tyndarus, on the other hand, implored his young master not to forget in better times the perils he might encounter for his sake.

While they are engaged in mutual protestations of friendship, uncommon between master and slave, Hegio, who, after his encounter with Ergasilus, had gone in to look over his banking account, and had postponed the visit to his brother, suddenly came upon them out of his house. Viewing them in their captive condition, he could not help sighing as he thought that his own Philopolemus was undergoing the same lot in Elis, but he also smiled inwardly to think that his son's release was now probably at hand. Accosting them both in an affable manner, he drew aside the noble Philocrates, whom he took for the slave Tyndarus, and began to ask him about his supposed master's position when in his native country. In spite of their melancholy plight, both captives were amused by the readiness with which Hegio had fallen into their snare, and while the real Tyndarus stood chuckling in the background, Philocrates, entering into the humour of the situation, not only told the truth, which was all that was necessary, but a little more. Thus, when he was asked to what family his supposed master belonged, he answered that he belonged to the family of Polyplusius, which was the most powerful in Elis, and that his father was called Thesauorchrysonochrysidēs. These names were not only sonorous to the ear, but, as the merest smatterer in Greek will perceive, actually rang with syllables indicating gold, wealth, and treasure. However, if the old gentleman was wealthy, Philocrates explained that he was dreadfully avaricious; so stingy, in fact, that when, in compliance to the pagan custom of his time, he sacrificed to his genius, he invariably used Samian vases, which were the commonest and cheapest ware, in case the genius should prove light-fingered.

Having sufficiently examined Philocrates, Hegio desired him to step aside, and addressed himself to Tyndarus, informing him that, if his statements agreed with those of his supposed slave, it would go well with him. Tyndarus, in the assumed character of Philocrates, feigned to be a little hurt at his slave's freedom of tongue, but at the same time remarked that, as fortune had destroyed the inequality of their condition, the man was, perhaps, right in studying the interests of his present rather than those of his former master. He also took occasion to convince Hegio that there was a God who watched over human affairs, and would award to the captive in Elis the same measure of mercy that was bestowed on the prisoners in Ætolia. That his father was a man of the highest rank and extremely wealthy he admitted; but he urged Hegio not, on that account, to be too exorbitant, since the old gentleman would in all probability rather see him the slave of a wealthy master abroad than pining in beggarly liberty at home. Exhortations of this kind were by no means displeasing to Hegio, who was anything but avaricious, and he at once frankly declared that if his own son, now a prisoner in Elis, were restored, he would release the two captives, master and servant, without further condition. On no other conditions would release be possible.

Tyndarus, in the character of Philocrates, commended the liberality of Hegio, and asked whether the young Ætolian was the slave of a private person or of the public. The information that his servitude was only of a private nature, and that his master was a physician of Elis, named Menarchus, showed that circumstances were most promising, inasmuch as Menarchus was a client of the old noble of Elis.

It was now agreed that Philocrates should proceed without delay to Elis, and thence bring back Philopolemus, Tyndarus being left behind as security. The old Ætolian would rather have sent somebody else, but he was persuaded that no other person would have equal weight with the father of Philocrates, and, after all, the proposed messenger was in his estimation no more than a slave, who even if he took himself off, and thus rendered the mission abortive, still left the prime security where it was. Moreover, Tyndarus, who was to remain with Hegio, consented to be responsible to the extent of twenty minæ (rather more than eighty pounds sterling) in the event of the supposed slave proving faithless.

All being thus arranged, and the chains being removed from both the captives, Hegio called Philocrates before him, and stated the duties which he was expected to perform. Tyndarus, on his part, gave weight to the injunctions of their common master; but though his words were spoken aloud, in the presence of Hegio, they conveyed a meaning which Philocrates alone could appreciate.

"When first you reach our country," said Tyndarus, "salute my father, my mother, my kinsfolk, and all good friends. Tell them that I am in good health, and am in the service of an excellent man, who treats me with all con-

sideration. Say, too, that we are always true to each other, and that in our changed condition, when fortune had made us equal, you still regarded me as a master. When my father hears this, he will surely not refuse to grant you the freedom which you have so amply merited; for he will bear in mind that by your aid alone I shall be restored to my home——"

As his words seemed to be carrying him too far, he checked himself, and proceeded thus

"By your aid alone, I say, for you revealed my true rank and the wealth of my father."

"Nay, Philocrates," replied the true owner of that name, "if I were to recount all the kindnesses you have shown to me, I should talk till to-morrow."

Much more was said in the same strain, the good Hegio being moved even to tears by the sight of such rare friendship between persons belonging to such different ranks of life. At last, leaving Tyndarus safely guarded, he set out on his projected visit to his brother, taking Philocrates with him, that, calling at his banker's by the way, he might supply him with money to cover the expense of travelling, and also obtain from the proper office a passport, which would enable him to surmount the obstacles that, in consequence of the war, might impede his journey to Elis.

All this business was done in due order, the passport and the required cash were obtained, Philocrates, in the character of Tyndarus, was despatched to the land of his birth; and Hegio went homewards, rejoiced at his good fortune, but almost tired out with the congratulations of the many friends he had encountered in the market-place. His brother's house lay in his road, and there he dropped in to look after his other captives, and to inquire if any one of them was acquainted with Philocrates. No sooner had he put the question than one of the unfortunate persons, whose name was Aristophontes, eagerly exclaimed that Philocrates was his most intimate friend, and that he should feel delighted to see him. This wish was as readily granted by Hegio as it was uttered by Aristophontes, and accordingly the former took the latter to his house, hoping to be the witness of a happy meeting.

The arrival of this unexpected visitor brought anything but joy to poor Tyndarus, who felt at his wits' end, and whose first impulse on getting a sight of Aristophontes, whom he at once recognised as his young master's friend, was to sneak out of the house, in order to gain a moment's time for deliberation. Here was a difficulty for which he had not been in the least prepared, and yet it was one that could not be overcome without the exercise of much thought and ingenuity.

Tyndarus was speedily followed by Hegio, who could not make out why he avoided a friend and countryman, and was still more puzzled when the supposed Philocrates was accosted by Aristophontes as Tyndarus. But Tyndarus had in the mean while hit on a plan, of which we often read in modern records of

craft and stratagem, but which was novel in the early days of which we are now speaking. He boldly asserted that Aristophontes was mad, nay, so very far gone in insanity, that while at home he had chased about his parents with a spear. Hegio, of course, was not to believe a word uttered by a being so dismally afflicted; indeed, if he valued his own safety, he had better keep out of the maniac's reach.

At first Hegio pursued a chain of reasoning which exactly answered the wily captive's purpose. Having heard the man whom he had supposed to be Philocrates called Tyndarus by Aristophontes, he readily accepted this fact, not as a proof of imposture on the part of the person accosted, but as confirmatory evidence of the madness of the speaker. However, the vehement protestations of Aristophontes that he was in his right mind, that the man before him was Tyndarus, and that no other slave named Tyndarus was known in the whole country of Elis, clinched as they were by an offer to be bound, that Hegio might feel secure against personal injury, at last induced the old gentleman to approach the madman, from whom he had lately shrunk, and to hear what he had to say.

The statement of Aristophontes was to the effect that he had known Tyndarus from the time when they were little children, and that the man before him was most assuredly Tyndarus, and not Philocrates, whom also he intimately knew, as he had previously declared. To Hegio's question, whether the name of the father of Philocrates was Thesaurochrysonichrysidēs, he answered that he had never heard that odd name in his life, and that the real name of the old gentleman in question was Theodoromēdes, which assuredly had probability in its favour. A very accurate description of the personal appearance of the real Philocrates completed the conviction of Hegio that the assertions of Aristophontes were true, and that he had been duped by his two captives. His rage and disappointment at the discovery that, to use his own words, he had parted with the nut and retained the shell as security was extreme, his first impulse being to call three of his strongest slaves, and order them to bind Tyndarus on the spot.

Finding that dissimulation no longer answered any useful purpose, Tyndarus now confessed all that he had done, adding that, whatever befel him, he should glory in having saved his young master at the risk of his own life. Perhaps Philocrates might keep his word and soon return; but even if the young noble were faithless, the slave could still rejoice in his own fidelity. He had been entrusted by his old master, Theodoromēdes, with the care of his son, and he could boast that he had fulfilled his trust.

Aristophontes, who had not understood the design of Tyndarus in charging him with insanity, and had been greatly incensed against him on that account, now perceived the mischief he had done, and was overwhelmed with remorse. For no man in the world had he more esteem than for Philocrates, and now

he had subjected to severe punishment the faithful slave who had endeavoured to save his friend by an unprecedented act of self-devotion. Greatly was he shocked, too, when he heard the cruelties which Hegio, in the madness of his rage, ordered to be inflicted upon Tyndarus. The wretched man was to be taken at once to a stone-quarry belonging to Hegio, which was situated outside the gates of the town, where he was to labour all day and be bound all night. The other slaves who toiled in the quarry were expected to hew out daily eight large blocks of stone; but Tyndarus, unless within the same time he hewed out twelve, was to be scourged without mercy. In vain did Aristophontes implore Hegio to show some degree of forbearance; the deceit practised on the old Ætolian had wounded him in the tenderest point, and, though when Tyndarus asked him whether he would not rejoice if Philopolemus had a slave who in like manner would assist him to escape from Elis, he sullenly answered in the affirmative, the argument produced no practical result. His whole life passed before him; he called to mind the little boy whom he had lost in his childhood, and, coupling this with his recent bereavement, he declared that henceforward he would never show mercy, as mercy had never been shown to him. Tyndarus was borne off to the quarry still exulting in what he had done. He could not refrain uttering a word of reproach to Aristophontes, but the only favour he asked was that, in the event of Philocrates' return, he might be permitted to see him.

Left alone, Hegio felt that he was the most wretched man in all Ætolia. Nor did it escape him that he was likely to encounter petty annoyances in addition to his great grief; for he knew well that a person who has been dexterously cheated, however serious the consequences may be to him, must make up his mind to be the laughing-stock of his neighbours. While he was indulging in these gloomy meditations, who should come up to him but Ergasilus, puffing and blowing, with joy in every feature. When last they had met, they had not parted on the best of terms, and Ergasilus had only accepted Hegio's invitation to a supper of herbs on the tacit understanding that, if an opportunity of tasting more generous fare presented itself in the course of the day, he would not allow his engagement with Hegio to prevent him from taking advantage of it. Why he was so delighted now Hegio could not make out, and to the many questions he put, he was for a long time only answered with exhortations to provide instantly as large a feast as possible. This sort of discourse, to a man suffering under severe calamity, could not be otherwise than annoying; but, at last, Ergasilus resolved to tantalise him no more, astonished him with the joyful tidings that he had just come from the port, where he had seen Philopolemus land in a boat, accompanied by Philocrates and another man, whom he had at once recognised as the slave who, years before, had fled with Hegio's child, and whose name was Stalagnus.

When the old Ætolian was once satisfied that

Ergasilus had spoken the truth, not a moment was to be lost; and he hastened to the port, leaving Ergasilus behind, with full powers over the kitchen, and all offices and things connected therewith. The season for eating had returned; and Ergasilus, having resolved to make up for lost time, entered the kitchen like a conqueror, and made such havoc among the provisions, while giving orders for the coming banquet, that the servants were stricken with terror, and began to think that a famine was at hand.

The joy with which Hegio embraced his son was, indeed, great; but more happiness was yet in store for him. Through the answers given to him by Stalagmus, and further elucidated by Philocrates, he learned that the child had been sold to Theodoromedes, and was, in fact, no other than the very Tyndarus who had just been taken to the quarry. The faithful slave was, therefore, at last rewarded. He had effected the liberation of not only the young master with whom he had been brought up as a companion, but also of his own brother, Philopolemus, and he had found a father in one of the best and wealthiest men of Ætolia.

The above story is the plot of Plautus's comedy, *The Captives*, reduced to a narrative form, with the intention of making more generally known a play which stands quite alone among the dramas of antiquity, and in this country, at least, has never been celebrated to the extent of its deserts.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

THE FRENCH IN IRELAND.

ON the morning of the 22nd of August, 1798, the town of Killala, a seaport facing a large inlet of the Atlantic in the county of Mayo, was startled by the appearance in the bay of three frigates, showing English colours. The arrival of English cruisers seemed especially unaccountable, as the province (Connaught) was then quiet, although rebellion was raging in other parts of Ireland.

Mr. Kirkwood, a magistrate, who commanded the local yeomanry, though not much alarmed, kept his corps of thirty horsemen under arms at the castle, the residence of Dr. Stook, Bishop of Killala; and so did Lieutenant Sills, of the Prince of Wales's Fencibles, his twenty militiamen from Ballina, a place seven miles and a half distant. Two sons of the bishop, eager to see the English men-of-war, threw themselves into a boat with the port-surveyor, and pulled off at once to the unexpected vessels.

The next day was the visitation of the dioceses of Killala and Achonry (see now abolished), and the sensible and good-natured bishop was entertaining three or four of the clergy and two officers of carbiniers, from Ballina, at the castle. The ladies of the family—the bishop's wife, his sister-in-law, Mrs. Cope, and eleven children—had just retired to the drawing-room. The bishop and his friends had drawn closer round the claret; the pleasant after-glow of a summer evening was gleaming on the ruby of the wine; the Atlantic

decaning into the bay was crimson as a bowl of Burgundy; when suddenly the door flew open, and a terrified messenger informed the bishop that the French had come, and that three hundred of them were within a mile of the town. General Humbert (Hoche's second in command at Bantry Bay in 1796) had, indeed, disembarked with one thousand and ninety men. The carbinier officers instantly leaped on their horses and dashed off to carry the news to Ballina. Lieutenant Sills resolved to fight, and mustered his fifty yeomen and fencibles at the castle gate. The men then marched into the main street, which stands at right angles to the castle, and prepared to meet the French advanced guard, which came on in a dark mass of blue and scarlet and sour sallow faces; the drums beating sharp, fierce, and quick. In a moment two yeomen were struck dead, and the rest fled, leaving Captain Kirkwood alone to stand fifty shots before he was taken. Lieutenant Sills, retreating into the castle, was soon after obliged to surrender to General Humbert, who sent him away the next day to the ships to be taken to France, because he was an Englishman. Nineteen of the yeomen were also secured by the French, and closely imprisoned in the bishop's drawing-room. One of the bishop's guests, the Reverend Dr. Thomas Ellison, of Castlebar, having formerly been an officer, could not resist the sound of the drum, and at the approach of the French shouldered a musket and joined the yeomen. He stood fire well, was wounded by a spent ball, and was one of the last to retreat into the castle. The worthy bishop retired into his garden to collect his mind while the firing went on, and succeeded in the attempt by the time the French general and staff of seventy officers arrived in the castle yard and demanded to see Monsieur l'Evêque.

The French soldiers were, except the grenadiers, generally short men; their clothes were shabby, their faces pale and sallow with the recent voyage and the fatigues of the campaigns of Italy and the Rhine. At the siege of Mentz, the winter before, many of them had suffered great privations. It is only necessary to say they were French soldiers, to be sure that they were temperate, intelligent, self-reliant, patient, and full of ardent courage. They had started eighteen days before from Rochelle, and had tried unsuccessfully to land in Donegal, where a succeeding expedition afterwards failed to get footing.

General Humbert, who had distinguished himself in the desperate Vendean war, was sanguine of success. Ten more frigates and three thousand men would soon be off the coast. Ireland would be a free and happy nation, under the protection of France, within a month. A Directory was immediately to be set up in Connaught. The tricolour and the green flag would wave together, and scare the English lion. Humbert was an ignorant man of low origin, who had forced his way through the ranks by prompt decision and by physical energy. His passions were furious, his manner marked by a roughness and violence that was only assumed

to carry out his own purposes. He was tall and well made, and in the vigour of life. His small sleepy eyes, languid with watching, cast side-long insidious glances, like those of a cat, and gave a forbidding look of distrust to his physiognomy.

The bishop being a travelled man, spoke good French, and General Humbert told him to be under no apprehension. He and all his people would be treated with respectful attention. He even hoped a person of the ability and consequence of the bishop would serve himself, and help to liberate his country, by joining the new Directorate. The main army, under General Kilmaine, numbered ten thousand men, and three thousand more on board ship were ready at Brest, under General Hardy. Nothing but what was absolutely necessary for support was to be taken by the French troops. The evening was spent in giving hurried orders for the disembarkation of the men, and making arrangements for their quarters. The French officers boasted, after their manner, that they had brought arms for one hundred thousand men and nine pieces of cannon. They had really with them arms for only five thousand five hundred men and two four-pounders.

That evening Humbert examined his prisoner, Captain Kirkwood, as to what supplies could be drawn from the town to assist the republicans in their march forward. Mr. Kirkwood replied, with such frankness and candour, that the French general liberated him on parole. His invalid wife, however, flying to the mountains, Kirkwood broke his parole to join her, and, after hiding for some days in the sea-coast caves of Erris, obtained permission to return to Killala, and found half the oats, salt, and iron in his stores removed by the angry French, and his dwelling-house almost a wreck.

The bishop's dining-room, on the evening of the landing, half an hour before the scene of tranquil festivity, was soon turned into a noisy guard-room crowded with gesticulating French soldiers dragging in leather valises and cases of ammunition, and with prisoners being examined by savage-looking republican officers, while in one corner a surly-looking grenadier captain was having a severe wound dressed by a surgeon and his assistant. Three hundred soldiers swore and chattered in the court-yard and offices. Immediately on entering the dining-room, the bishop's butler was called for, ordered to collect all the plate and secure it in his pantry. Not an article stolen, nor so much as a hat, whip, or great-coat pilfered from the hall. The yeomanry were locked in the drawing-room in the middle floor. Two bed-chambers adjoining were seized for the general and his principal officers. The attic story, a library, and three bedrooms were reserved sacredly for the bishop and his family, and only on one occasion did the officers ever enter those rooms, and that occasion was the evening the tidings reached the French of their victory at Castlebar.

The bishop has left us a vivid picture (worthy of Waverley) of the first night after the landing of the French. "It is not easy," he says,

"by any force of language to convey an adequate idea of the miseries of that first night which succeeded to the landing of the enemy. To the terrified imaginations of the town's people the castle instantly presented itself as the only place where they could have a chance of safety. Thither accordingly they fled, without distinction of age, sex, or condition, forcing their way into every corner of the house and offices, occupying the staircases, spreading through the bed-chambers, and some of them even thrusting themselves and their children into the same beds with the infants of the bishop's family. Women that had lain sick in their beds for a month before, and one old lady past eighty, who was bed-ridden, and believed to be at the point of death, gathering strength from despair, contrived to work their way to the very top of the house. Chairs were placed round the lobby of the attic story, on which the family, with some of their principal acquaintance, remained without a thought of repose for the whole night. Indeed the leaden hand of sleep could not have closed any eyelids but those of an infant. The whole house resounded like a bedlam with the loquacity of the Frenchmen below, and the shrieks and groans of the fugitives above. Among the last there wanted not some, who sought consolation from the whisky bottle, in consequence of which they became presently so clamorous and troublesome, that it was found necessary to restrain them by force."

Two of the bishop's clerical guests had fled on foot to the mountains on the first alarm, leaving their horses to be seized by the French, but the Dean of Killala brought his wife and children for shelter to the castle; the Reverend Robert Nixon, curate of the parish, and the Reverend Mr. Little, of Lachan, also sought the same asylum with the bishop, his eleven children, and his thirteen servants.

On the morning after his arrival, Humbert pushed forward to Ballina a detachment of a hundred men, forty of whom he mounted on the best horses he could find in the country. He concealed under the arch of a bridge near Killala a sergeant's guard, to watch the enemy's reconnoiters. A shot from this ambuscade proved fatal to a brave young clergyman, the Reverend George Fortescue (nephew to Lord Clermont), who had put himself at the head of a party of observation from Ballina. That town at once fell into the hands of the French, the carbineers, the yeomanry—all but one fat lazy fellow, who was caught in bed—taking to their heels with great unanimity. Humbert returned to Killala in triumph in poor Mr. Fortescue's two-horse curricule, with the fat yeoman (looking like a seal just awoke) by his side in full uniform. Several hundreds of rebel peasants, recruits, rent the air with their acclamations. A green flag, with the inscription "Erin go Bragh," was now mounted over the castle gate as a rallying standard for the pikemen, to whom arms, clothing, and ammunition were to be at once distributed. Ready money would arrive in the very first ships from France. In the mean time goods

brought in voluntarily were to be paid for by drafts on the future Irish Directory. For the first three days the French commissary of stores spent his whole time in writing these valuable documents, but at last he began to treat the matter as a joke, and the people soon learned to consider it in that light also. Other promises were, however, more promptly fulfilled. Chests, each containing forty fusils, and boxes crammed with new French uniforms and gaudy helmets, were unlocked in the castle yard, and the contents given to the first applicants. About one thousand peasants were completely clothed; the next comers received everything but shoes and stockings; to the last arms only were given—in all, about five thousand five hundred stand, according to French reckoning. The muskets were well made, but the bore was too small for English bullets; the carbines were especially good; the swords and pistols were reserved for the rebel officers.

The country people pressed forward to snatch these fatal presents, forgetting that an English army of scarcely fewer than one hundred thousand men was already marching fast towards county Mayo. The ragged ploughmen and bog-cutters hardly knew themselves when dressed, washed, and powdered. The French soldiers watched with droll contempt the avidity with which the Irish recruits fell on their allowance of fresh meat. They reported that one Irish savage, having been given eight pounds of beef at once, threw himself on the ground and gnawed at it like a wild beast till it was all consumed. Many of the recruits were forced to join by the menaces of their friends and the dread of rumoured Orangeman oppression. The bishop paints quite a Hogarthian picture of the vanity and ignorance of these raw, hot-blooded levies:

"The coxcombs of the young clowns in their new dress; the mixture of good humour and contempt in the countenances of the French, employed in making puppies of them; the haste of the undressed to be as fine as their neighbours, casting away their old clothes long before it came to their turn to receive the new; above all, the merry activity of a handsome young fellow, a marine officer, whose business it was to consummate the vanity of the recruits by decorating them with helmets beautifully edged with spotted brown paper to look like leopard's skin, a task which he performed standing on a powder barrel, and making the helmet fit any skull, even the largest, by thumping it down with his fists, careless whether it could ever be taken off again—these were circumstances that would have made you smile, though you had been just come from seeing your house in flames. A spectacle not less provoking to mirth presented itself to your view, if you followed the new soldiers after they had received their arms and cartridges, and observed their manner of using them. It was common with them to put in their cartridges at the wrong end; and when they stuck in the passage (as they often did), the inverted barrel was set to work against the ground till it was bent and

useless. At first they were trusted with balls, as well as with powder. But this practice was not repeated, after it had gone near costing his life to General Humbert. As he was standing at an open window in the castle, the general heard a ball whistle by his ear, discharged by an awkward recruit in the yard below, whom he instantly punished with an unmerciful caning."

The young soldiers were especially fond of shooting the ravens (that, since the civil war, owing to the number of unburied bodies, had increased in the devastated parts of Ireland) for their quills.

The French now required boats at once, to transport the artillery and stores from their ships, and carts and horses to bring them from the shore to the town. High prices were offered, but the fishermen and carmen did not respond. The bishop was then applied to; but he said that he was a new comer, and, moreover, had no authority, civil or personal, in the town. Humbert replied that he was the principal inhabitant, Kirkwood the magistrate having fled and broken his parole, and he must and should procure a supply of boats and carts, and that in twenty-four hours.

Next morning, when neither boat nor car appeared, Humbert became furious. He poured forth a torrent of vulgar abuse, roared, stamped, laid his hand frequently on a scimitar that battered the ground, presented a pistol at the bishop's eldest son, and at last told the bishop himself that he would make him sensible he was not to be trifled with, for he should punish his disobedience by sending him instantly to France. Orders to this effect were given on the spot to an officer, who delivered the bishop in charge to a corporal's guard, only allowing him time to put on his hat. The inhabitants stared in silence, as they saw their bishop conducted on foot through the town. The French soldiers marched him at a good pace along the road that led to the ships, and seemed to have received orders not to answer any of his questions.

Their pretended ferocity was only a ruse de guerre. Half a mile from town the general sent an express to call back the bishop, and the French officers loaded him with apologies for their hasty but good-natured chief. Humbert himself received him on the castle stairs, and pleaded the necessity of the occasion. The fishermen and boatmen, alarmed for their good bishop, had already appeared.

Though the enemy was full of professions, and took nothing with them but what was absolutely necessary for the field, they nearly ruined the poor bishop. They burned thirty tons of his coal in one month, besides setting the kitchen chimney several times on fire with their ragoûts. They drove away his nine horses, and six more belonging to his guests. They consumed his corn, potatoes, and cattle, before they touched those of any one else. They emptied his well-filled cellar and larder in three days. They carried off his cars, carts, and waggons, so that the worthy prelate computed his loss in thirty days only, at six hundred pounds.

Meanwhile, the enemy's main body, under Kilmaine, had landed, and had scarcely began their march, when a flag of truce arrived from Castlebar, carried by Captain Grey of the carbineers. He came, under pretence of inquiry for an officer wounded at Ballina, to discover the strength of the enemy. He privately told the bishop that a force three times Humbert's number waited at Castlebar to give a good account of the enemy.

Everywhere before the French advance flattered the impudent proclamation of General Kilmaine. In this caricature of republican aggression he said that a band of heroes had come to liberate the Irish from the hands of tyrants, to teach them the arts of war, and to despise the "low pursuits of toil and industry." "We have made," said the gasconader, "all the nations we have conquered happy by arresting their property, by applying it to the common cause, and consecrating it to the champions of liberty. Property is a common right belonging to the valour that seizes it." (Could Canning have written a more bitter parody than this of intolerant and fanatical republicanism?) "We have always destroyed the unassuming tranquillity of Switzerland, and the wealth, the power, and the bigotry of Italy are no more." The proclamation ended by imploring the Irish to cast off the bondage of religion, and to put down "that grand impostor, the Pope." The Irish were to "fly to the French standard, and enjoy at once the blessings of French fraternity."

The French entered Ballina with about nine hundred bayonets and two thousand pikes.

The omens that greeted them were not favourable. No disaffected Protestants joined the tricolour, no well-to-do persons of any kind. On a tree, in a conspicuous place, hung a rebel agent, executed for having a French commission in his pocket. The French officers embraced the unconscious rascal, "bedewed the body with tears of sympathetic civism," exposed the corpse in the streets to excite the populace against the loyalists; and, after that, carried the dead body to the Roman Catholic chapel to lie in state surrounded by lighted candles, as that of a hero, a patriot, and a martyr.

In the mean time, Lake and Cornwallis were roused and in earnest. There were two roads (now disused) leading from Ballina to Castlebar. The lower road, by the east of Lough Conn, passes through Foxford and crosses the river Moy, a deep wide river, by a long narrow bridge. This road was guarded by General Taylor with the Kerry regiment, two battalion guns, some companies of the line, and some yeomanry cavalry. The upper road by the pass of Barnageeragh, running westward of Lough Conn, was considered impracticable, and therefore left open. Humbert leaped at the chance; he pretended to go by Foxford, then dashed at the pass and all but surprised the unsuspecting English. An accident prevented the surprise. A small farmer, up at three to visit the cattle on his mountain-farm, observed a strong

column of men dressed in dark blue winding towards the pass. He instantly galloped to Castlebar and woke up the garrison. General Trench rode out towards the pass, but his escort being fired on by the French advanced guard, he rode back to call out his forces and form them on a range of rocky heights north of the town, commanding a rising ground one thousand yards distant, which Humbert must of necessity cross. The blue and the scarlet were to meet again upon a new battle-field. It was too late now to occupy the pass that Humbert could never have forced if it had been held by only a single company. The pikemen were already hallooing and tossing their rude weapons, that thirsted for English Protestant blood; but Humbert did not believe in pikes against muskets.

The royalists were in two lines on the heights; first the Kilkenny militia, some of the 6th, and a party of the Prince of Wales's fencibles. In the second line were the Fraser fencibles and the Galway yeomanry. In a valley in the rear were four companies of the Longford militia in reserve. The cavalry, a part of the 6th Dragoon Guards and the 1st Fencibles, were in the rear of the first line; the artillery were a little in advance, two carriage guns on the right of the road, and to the left two battalion guns of the Kilkenny militia.

At eight o'clock the tricolour showed, and the French drums beat loud, as Humbert's men came on in a close driving column, covered by a clump of rebels roughly dressed in French uniform, sent forward with the agreeable object to themselves of drawing the first heat of the artillery fire. To the swarms of noisy pikemen in his rear, Humbert—already sick of his wild allies, and their superstition, treachery, greediness, and cruelty—paid no attention whatever. But woe betide the Kilkenny and Longford men if they were once broken and the pikes came down among them.

The royalist guns were coolly and cleverly served. The first round shot from Captain Shortall's six-pounder plumped full into the head of the advancing French column and broke it into two parts. Humbert drew his column back and re-formed. Again the hydra head appeared over the ridge, and a second shot struck the column in the old wound. Fifty brave Frenchmen then ran forward and got under cover of a house, but the rest retired again to re-form. The first blood was decidedly for the king; so far so good.

Five minutes' lull and the indefatigable column again crossed the ridge, driving cattle before them to blunt the cannonade. This was an old wild Irish and buccaneer trick. But, again repulsed, Humbert at once changed his tactics, and deployed rapidly from his centre with open files, until he had formed lines, mostly in rank entire, nearly parallel to the English position. The skill and rapidity of these manoeuvres of veteran troops staggered the mere militia regiments. They began firing uselessly at a harmless distance. The French, encouraged by this alarm, ran forward *en tirailleur*, seized some hedges,

and extended with great rapidity to outflank the royalist line.

In war, the man first frightened is first beaten. The militia wavered along its whole length, then fell back, leaving the cannon unprotected. The regular troops fled pell-mell to the town. A few of the Longford men were rallied, and fired from stone wall to stone wall to check the advance of the enemy, and afterwards on the Bridge of Castlebar, to protect a curricule gun, there still steadily served by the artillerymen. This party of brave men suffered severely, for they were galled by a cross fire from two roads and from the houses on either side. The men often fell back and were rallied by their officers. At length, nearly all the artillerymen being shot, the gun became silent, and a body of French hussars dashed forward at the charge, but were repulsed. The staunch men retreated, having lost two officers and half their number.

The French were as brave, and still more daring. Ten of their hussars hung on the rear of the fugitives, and, capturing a gun, were about to turn it on the runaways, when a large number of Lord Roden's "fox-hunters" charged back, killed five, and drove off the rest. The place where these hussars were buried is still called French Hill. The carbiniers fled with such extravagant haste that they achieved the sixty-three miles between Castlebar and Athlone in twenty-seven hours. The French took fourteen guns. The Royalists lost fifty-three men, thirty-four were wounded, and two hundred and seventy-nine were taken prisoners. Fifty-three men of the Longford militia deserted to the enemy, and, reversing their coats, were marched into Killala amid the cheers of the delighted rebels.

A more disgraceful defeat than that of the Royalists at Castlebar not even Walcheren or Bergen-op-Zoom exhibited. The rebels stormed into the town, mad with delight; but, thanks to the French, they committed no cruelties, eager as they generally were for Protestant blood. Almost the only victim was a lion of a Highlander who would not leave his post at the door of the town jail. He shot down five Frenchmen; and, while he was loading for the sixth time, a grenadier, beating out his brains, flung him down the steps with the sentry-box upon him.

The garrison of Killala was now ordered to the front, and only three French officers, Charost, Boudet, and Ponson, left to drill and keep in order two hundred armed rebels. Charost was the son of a watchmaker of Paris, and had been a planter at St. Domingo. He was a vigorous portly man, with a pleasing expression of face, and great good nature. Boudet was a tall, thin bragging Norman, argumentative and irascible, Ponson a little merry Navarrese, brave, watchful, and indefatigable. These men did their best to protect the threatened Protestants, giving them arms, and keeping up a nightly patrol. The mutinous rebels becoming infuriated at the distribution of arms, they were given up to guards appointed for each district of the town and neighbourhood.

General Humbert, writing to Charost, and ordering him either to bury the powder which had been left behind, or to throw it into the sea, ninety barrels were hidden under a hotbed in the garden, and the rest placed in a vault in a haggard under the corn-stand. On three occasions fires broke out near the powder, and it was only by the great precautions of the excellent bishop that it was eventually saved.

The rebel officers were generally great scoundrels, and kept the Protestants of Killala in perpetual alarm by their insolence and threats. The worst of them was a drunken fellow named Bellew, brother of the titular Roman Catholic Bishop of Killala. He had fought well among the Russians, and had been desperately wounded at the siege of Ismail. He was quartered at the house of a merchant, from whom he extorted money and clothes, and was in the habit of tearing down slips of the wall-paper to light his pipe, and was tyrannical and unbearable. Another of these swaggerers was named O'Donnel, a young farmer and custom-house officer, who vexed the bishop by his vulgar forwardness; but who always did his best to keep the peace and to restrain the insurgents. This man was afterwards shot by the English when they retook Killala, and Bellew was hanged.

In the mean time, the French had already lost all hope, and were disgusted with their allies, whom they beat and neglected, everywhere taking to themselves the best food and the best quarters. Only three drunken and degraded priests had yet joined the French, who had lost favour with the people by openly deriding both their piety and their superstition. None of the gentry had joined them, except two or three lost men, sottish and reprobate. The French also especially offended the peasants by resolutely preventing as much as possible the robbery or murder of Protestants.

The game was now nearly played out. Humbert turned from Sligo. Marching by Drummahair towards Leitrim, the French general, nearly at his last move, left behind three guns, and threw five more into the river. He was now making for Longford, where the people had risen, but the staunchest of bull-dogs were close upon his heels. The French rear guard was incessantly pressed by General Lake's cavalry, behind whom were mounted the light infantry. Humbert, at bay, halted from time to time, and grappled with his leading assailants. Half a mile from Ballynamuck, Sarazin, the second in command, at last surrendered with all the rear guard.

The Earl of Roden and Colonel Crawford, then sounding a trumpet, rode up to the French advance guard, and desired them to surrender, to save any more effusion of blood. Humbert requiring half an hour to think over it, and still retreating, Lord Roden ordered the advance; the first and second French brigade then surrendered to about three hundred of our cavalry. Humbert rallied his grenadiers and chasseurs, and made prisoners Lord Roden and twenty of his dragoons, who were taking some

guns. They were prisoners exactly fifteen minutes, and during all that time the French officers kept cursing the United Irishmen for having deceived and disappointed them. The fencibles advancing in angry search for their colonel, the seven hundred and forty-eight French and ninety-six officers surrendered, or they would have been instantly cut to pieces. The French, since their landing at Killala, had lost two hundred and eighty-eight men.

The revenge taken on the wretched Irish rebels was savagely cruel. About five hundred were cut down, shot, or hanged during the pursuit round Ballynamuck. They were found by dozens in the fields, drunk or worn-out with fatigue. Wherever they were met, the sabre fell upon them. At Carrick-on-Shannon seventeen rebels were hanged at one time at the door of the court-house, the prisoners being compelled to draw lots from the adjutant's hat—one hundred lots, with death written on seventeen of them.

On the 25th, the sound of cannon and the flame of blazing cabins announced the advance of the royalists upon Killala. The town became rapidly filled with frightened fugitives from Ballina. The rebels made a stand behind some stone walls on the high ground outside the town. Their fire was ineffective, and they were at once routed and pursued by the Roxburgh cavalry. Four hundred of them were cut down in the streets or mown down by the cannon on the sea-shore. One Protestant gentleman was shot in his own hall by a bullet intended for a rebel he was trying to exclude, and Colonel Charost narrowly escaped death from the gun of a maddened Highlander who wanted to give no quarter.

So ended an irrational and useless insurrection, with the usual horrible results of more bloodshed and less liberty. General Trench instantly pushed detachments into the wild districts of Laggan and Erris, where the rebels' cabins were burnt by dozens. For years after, however, the mountain borders of Sligo and Galway were infested by deserters and outlaws, who lived by cattle-stealing, and who houghed the cattle and burnt the corn-stacks of their enemies. Two of the most notorious of these robbers, Gibbons and M'Greal (Red James), were at last seized; the former was hanged and the latter pardoned.

On the 27th of October, in this same year 1798, two French frigates again entered Killala Bay with two thousand men: intending to commence operations by burning the town and carrying the bishop off to France—as they said, for betraying them. Some English cruisers, however, appearing, the frigates stood out to sea, and came no more. They were already too late, for the Brest squadron had been struck to pieces after a long and gallant fight, on the 11th of October, off Tory Island, by Sir John Borlase Warren, and there were captured one seventy-four, three vessels of thirty-six guns, and two of forty; three others escaped. Wolf Tone, captured in one of the French vessels, was tried and

condemned to death, but he killed himself in prison.

NOTE.—WAGER OF BATTLE.—At page 498 of the volume just issued, the author of *Old Stories* Re-told attributes to the REV. MR. BEDFORD an injudicious visit to the prisoner Thornton. It has been since ascertained that the anecdote must have applied to some one else, for Mr. Bedford had not taken orders at the time that Abraham Thornton was charged with the murder of Mary Ashford. This correction is made in justice to the memory of a much-respected clergyman.

FERN COLLECTING.

I FORGET how I came to take to ferns. I think it was through a conversation with a lady who talked of giving them to her cottager-friends to cultivate in their window-gardens.

"In their windows fully exposed to the light!" I sceptically exclaimed.

"Yes," was the quiet, self-possessed reply. She knew more about the matter than I did then. Moreover, she kindly followed up the lesson by sending me sundry bits of fern to try my 'prentice hand upon. From that day, ferns have grown upon my affections, and on those of people whom I have bitten with the mania.

One of these subjects on which to experiment was a frond of a pretty hen-and-chicken fern, *Asplenium odontites*, a stranger from New Zealand and Tasmania. To display my knowledge, the part which in ferns answers to the leaf in other plants is called a frond (from the Latin frons, frondis, a leaf, or a leafy branch, of a tree), to distinguish it from the leaf of a flowering plant. Fronds do really differ from leaves proper, by bearing the reproductive organs of the plant (called spores) on their under surface, or sometimes on their margin. This graceful, drooping, light-green *Asplenium* is one of the viviparous, proliferous, or young-bearing species. On the surface of the fronds there grow little plants, duly furnished eventually both with green tops and with rootlets, which, as soon as they are big enough to be conveniently handled, may be detached from the mother frond and planted out in pots, separately or in company, and kept shaded, moist, and warm, perhaps under a bell-glass, until established.

These buds, or bulbil plants, first appear in the shape of tiny dots on the parent frond, like fly-spots, or as if some insect had laid its eggs there. From this dot there protrudes a little green tail, which is, in fact, the infant frond. The development then continues gradually until you have a perfect plantling—being old enough to wean. This mode of reproduction is a very curious substitute for the usual course of increase by spores or seeds. I was very proud of my chicken ferns on discovering that they could go alone. I distributed them liberally, and several of them are already mothers.

The second was a bit of Hare's-foot fern, *Davallia canariensis*, whose creeping, fur-clad stems protrude over the edge of the pot, exactly

as if a hare was thrusting out its paw there. This is an interesting plant, being one of the earliest foreign ferns introduced (from Madeira, in 1699) to this country. It represents, on a small scale, a style of growth of which the Tartarian Lamb, *Cibotium Barometz*, is a celebrated example. "Among the King of Denmark's Rarities is to be seen the skin of the Lamb-plant, which one cannot distinguish from the skin of an ordinary lamb. It grows in *Muscovy*, and changes its place in growing, and wheresoever it turns the grass withers. The wolf is the only beast that will feed upon it, and it is used as a bait to catch him. The people use this skin for lining of their vests, and they call it *Boranez*, that is, a Lamb."* These stories told about it to early travellers led them to describe it as animal with flesh and blood, but fixed to one position from which it never moves. In some species of *Cibotium*, the quantity of silky hairs is so great that in the Sandwich Islands it is collected, and ship-loads of it sent to California and Australia for stuffing cushions, beds, and the like. The Barometz, Mr. Smith tells us, is of easy cultivation. If placed on soil slightly raised, a few years' growth will produce very good specimens of the "Lamb."

The Hare's-foot is one of those plants which will take their ease at certain periods. Mine was planted at a time when it knew it had a right to a holiday; and, do all I could, it would not stir. So I put it on one side and forgot it. By-and-by, wanting a flower-pot for something, I took this, and was going to empty it, but was prevented by finding my Hare's-foot starting. It was promoted forthwith to the window-sill, and will, one of these days, make a respectable figure; but the rate of its progress, for the present, suits the paw of the tortoise rather than the foot of the hare. Somebody lately inquired of the Gardeners' Chronicle how to make a stubborn bit of hare's-foot grow. It retained all its vitality, but would show no signs of life. My private recommendation to him is, "Be in no hurry: have patience; wait."

My third trial-scrap was, I think, a morsel of *Asplenium adiantoides*, or *Colensoi*, a free-habited individual from New Zealand, one of the ferns whose rootstocks produce side-shoots, which may be readily separated with a knife and so employed for propagation. My bit, pining after its beloved parent, did not do much good at first; but when once it got firm possession of the pot, by petting, it grew and grew until its spreading, wedge-shaped, much-divided fronds have become the admiration of all beholders. And it has already given me a side-crown or two wherewith to make other fern-growers happy.

Years ago I was presented, as a rarity, with a plant of *Adiantum Capillus-Veneris*, the True Maidenhair Fern, from Cornwall, out of some sea-side cavern. It was, I was told, difficult and delicate, averse to light and air—the only accurate part of which information is that, although

a native plant, it cannot stand *frost*. Treated like a succulent (and sometimes forgotten) in a warm and dry secluded corner, it gradually pined away and disappeared. I had not yet read in Moore's Handbook, nor observed for myself, that "Ferns are natural hygrometers, their occurrence in a state of luxuriance being a certain indication that the locality is moist, either atmospherically or terrestrially, or both. The degree of luxuriance attained by them at any spot is a tolerable index of the degree of moisture of that spot, and the presence of these plants in any abundance is generally to be taken as evidence of abundant moisture."

Not long since, travelling along the famous Corniche, or Cornice, which is the road from Genoa to Nice, I saw, on a wall-top, the charming *Ceterach officinarum*, or Common Sealy Spleenwort (not so very common), and, on a sunny rock, the Maidenhair of brightest green, looking like a dryad's sable tresses frizzled into verdigris curls. The diligence would not stop to allow me to botanise, so the next day's journey was performed on foot. Both those gems rewarded me by their capture—the Maidenhair with the secret of growing it. There it was, luxuriating on the face of a rock, exposed to the blaze of Mediterranean sunshine, but with its roots continually bathed by the trickling of a thread of water.

A few plants of this, torn up by the hair of their head and roughly brought home in a napkin kept moist, looked wretched enough, not to say done for, on arriving at their journey's end. Nevertheless, planted in a pot with a saucer to it always containing water and set in the sun, they sent up, first, some tiny fronds, then stronger ones, until they became, and have continued ever since, as vigorous as in their native habitat. They now exemplify the accuracy of Moore's remark, that this most delicate and graceful fern, which has the additional merit of being evergreen, is dispersed, though "somewhat varying in form," over the middle and south of Europe. They also confirm his observation, "Notwithstanding that, for many ferns, shade is an indispensable requisite, yet it must be held to be far less important generally than either moisture or shelter. Some ferns—both of those which grow naturally on dry rocks and of those which occur in situations where their roots are constantly moistened—even prefer exposure to the sun." And even shadow-born and dusk-dwelling ferns, like certain other higher organisms, manifest a craving for what is not good for them. They thrive best in the shade; it suits their constitution; and yet they stretch out their fronds to catch what gleam of sunshine they may.

Uneducated and unbotanical persons are readily led to take an interest in ferns. When once they come to know them, they wonder greatly that they had not before remarked their variety and beauty. "I have seen them on my way going backwards and forwards, but I took them for weeds and thought they were all alike." To which you reply that, though there is a strong family likeness, every leaf is not the

* The Wonders of Nature in all Parts of the World.

same; that all foreign plants recently introduced, and not changed by culture, must have been weeds somewhere and at some time or other; and that a plant requiring good gardening in one country may elsewhere become a weed—witness the very different behaviour of the cardoon in England and in South America.

The names of ferns are a stumbling-block to many; but, as Mr. Smith remarks, the complaint is more imaginary than real. Cultivators and plant-amateurs not versed in scientific literature have only to recollect that time and use have made them familiar with such names as *Rhododendron*, *Hydrangea*, *Mesembryanthemum*, *Elscholtzia*, and many others now pronounced as fluently as if they were original words of our mother-tongue. For those who fancy they would be more easily reconciled to long-sounding names if they knew their meaning, he has considerably drawn up a table showing the derivation of the names of the genera of ferns.

Many of our native ferns have English names. The Lady-fern, the Hart's-tongue, and the Adder's-tongue speak for themselves. We, however—self and accompanying un-book-learned fern-chasers—cut the Gordian knot by giving, like Adam, names on our own responsibility, retaining, however, the Ceterach, which is just as easy as Almanack.

We are exploring a wood, singly, through thicket and bramble, and keep up a communication by interchanging "Hi!"s and "Ho!"s.

"Hi!"

"Ho!"

"Do come this way, I have found a fern I never saw before."

"Surely not. You must have seen it. There is nothing *here* new to us. Which way? Where are you?"

"Straight on before you; on the other side of the great oak. Make haste; there's a horrible corpse-like smell, as if somebody had been murdered here. We must search together for body."

"Here I am, then. You *have* seen the fern, but never such beauties. It's the Fragile Fern ('fragile' being Latin, French, and English, we so christen the *Cystopteris fragilis*); and your murdered body is that group of ugly right-up mushrooms, some of which are melting into rottenness."

"So it is. What a pestilence!"

"Now that the Fragiles are safe in the basket, let us try and find up a few old Emilies" (*Lastrea æmula*).

"There may be young ones left, perhaps, but we have already carried off every old Emily. They're handsome, certainly, those very old Emilies; but they make a deal of dirt in a room [by scattering their spores], and you'll turn yours out of doors before very long."

This same, "one of the most beautiful of all the British species, being of moderate size, gracefully pendulous in habit, and perfectly evergreen,"* is (as the Hay-scented Buckler Fern) an instance that by any other name an Emily and a fern may smell as sweet.

The longevity of many ferns is another attaching circumstance. They are not ephemeral friends who, when they have had their day out of you, leave you to reflect on the brevity of vegetable companionships. They are not—with the scanty exception of three only out of the whole multitudinous order—transient animals which flaunt through a summer and then fade away, to revive no more. Their span of life has often a duration co-equal with or exceeding our own. We can, therefore, address our aged pets in the affectionate words of the Scottish song, "John Anderson my Jo, Fern, we've clomb the hill together; and we'll sleep together at the foot, Fern Jo—unless you survive me, planted out on my grave."

In 1820, Mr. Smith* found plants of *Asplenium marinum* having fronds from two to four inches in length, growing in a cave facing the German Ocean, on the east coast of Scotland. Two of these plants have been growing at Kew *from that time*. Forty-seven years is a nice little period during which to have kept a pot-plant alive, leaving it, moreover, finer at the end than at the beginning of the term. Of late years, one of them was kept in the temperate, the other in the tropical house. They have become fine caespitose or turfy plants, with fronds varying from a foot to a foot and a half in length. The greatest length of frond has been attained by the plant indulged with a lodging in the tropical house. It has even assumed the character of a species native of the West Indies and tropical America, and quite unlike the original plant; thus showing that—like many other ferns, as *Polystichum aculeatum*, the *Lastreas dilatata*, and Male Fern, the Common Hart's-tongue, and the Common Brake—although quite at home in the sunless cave, it can well appreciate a warmer and better-supplied abode.

For ferns show themselves grateful for kindness, when you do not carry it so far as to kill them with it by over-syringing and sprinkling of the leaves, by incessant re-pottings, or fidgety changes of soil. As a rule, when a fern is once well established and at home in its pot, let it rest in quiet as long as it looks happy and comfortable. It is not a creature fond of change, any more than an oyster or a limpet is. Like them, its food is brought to it by currents of moisture in air and earth. Look at the species which may be called domestic, fixing themselves on church-walls, tombstones, and buildings of a certain age; such as the Hart's-tongue, the Wall Rue, the Common Polypody, and the Ceterach. They thrive, without shifting, year after year, lustre after lustre, and decade after decade; as do the rock-loving kinds, the *Aspleniums* in general. Whenever one of these has taken kindly to a pot, however cramped, cracked, or battered, and filled with never-mind-what sort of rubbish, it is best to let well alone, and leave the wilful thing to please itself. You want it to grow in a pretty china vase, and in nice black leaf-mould; and it won't. Very provok-

* Moore.

* Ferns: British and Foreign. By John Smith, A.L.S.

ing, no doubt. It reminds you of your donkey, which turns aside its head from a bunch of fresh sweet grass to munch dirty straw and dusty dead leaves. It is their nature to.

Another instance of long life under simple treatment is the original plant of *Neottopteris Australasica* at Kew, imported in 1825, and now a magnificent specimen, although but rarely shifted during those forty years and more. This, however, is far surpassed in size and beauty by the *Neottopteris musæfolia*, or Banana-leaved Bird's-nest Fern, a species described in the following words: "I saw two fine specimens of the Bird's-nest Fern, each of which had between forty and fifty perfect green leaves; the average length of the leaves was six feet, and from one foot to fourteen inches across in the broadest part. They were growing on each side of a doorway; when I was walking up to them, I thought they were American aloes."

But the age of these, as well as of Mr. Smith's Marine Aspleniums, must be trifling compared with that of many tree ferns growing wild with trunks from twenty to thirty feet high and more—or even with that of specimens of our native species which have a tendency in their old days to run up to stalk. The *Osmunda*, for instance, the royal or flowering fern, grows in tufts, which, in favourable situations, and with age, become erect and trunk-like, often attaining an elevation of two feet or more—and requiring time to do it in.

The development of the Tree Fern from the scarcely visible spore to the lofty-plumed columnar shaft is long, long, long. That spore might be the grain of mustard-seed of Scripture. Consequently, like the Scholastics who bought a crow to see whether it would live a couple of centuries, I have procured an infant Australian tree fern, to ascertain how long it will take to grow as tall as my house is high.

And not only are ferns long lived as individuals, they are geologically ancient of days. We hear of old people, who knew other old people, who had talked with or knew somebody who had talked with Dr. Johnson, or Richard III., or possibly King Stephen and William Rufus. It is a question whether some of our human forefathers have not seen mammoths and gigantic Irish elks in the flesh. There is no question, but a certainty, that ferns were "Hail fellow, well met!" with strange and remarkable vegetable forms whose representatives have long ceased to exist.

The coal which cooks our Sunday dinners mainly consists of the ferns which increased and multiplied long before such a thing as Sunday existed. They were contemporaneous with the *Sigillarias*, the *Lepidodendrons*, the *Stigmarias*, and the *Calamites*—all now swept away to the limbo of the past. Their vigorous growth was unbrowsed on by ruminant, ungnawed by rodent animals. No collectors ravaged them for the London markets, "leading to the extinction of rare native species, and rendering even the more common scarce in localities within easy reach." They are the connecting ink between the present era and the hot old

times of scalding rain and of earthquakes shaking the land as housemaids shake carpets. They knew the days when there was no such thing as climate, the earth being everywhere warm alike. Our planet was still so hot in itself that its innate temperature rendered superfluous and inappreciable the heat which reached it from the sun.

Tell me, proud arborescent Fern, are the intense heat and incessant rains of tropical Africa only a mild souvenir of the atmospheric state of the Carboniferous Period? If so, you will allow that it is better, if not for you, for me at least, to have come into the world now than then.

THE STORY OF ROSSCREAGH HOUSE.

MANY years ago, when I was a young man, I had occasion to travel on business of importance in the north of Ireland. Arrived at Newry in the evening, I received the pleasant intelligence that no "kyar" could be had to take me on that night to the place of my destination, a village some eight or ten miles—Irish miles—beyond Rosstrevor, the next attempt at a town.

"Sure couldn't yer honour stop where I was for the night? The beds was iligint, and divil a bit o' good was to be done out the night. It was goin' to rain and blow, snow, maybe, and the road undher the mountain, along by the say, was a wild place intirely, haardly a house anywhere along it, an'," in a lowered tone, "thim most partly banted."

But my business brooked no delay, and I persisted in my inquiries, till I found that if I chose to leave my valise to be sent after me in the morning I could hire a "horse-baste."

"Jist give the baste his head," were the parting words of the owner; "don't bother him any way, at all, at all; but spake till him whiles, he'll understand your honour like a Christian, an' divil a bit o' need ye'll have for whip or spur."

And so it proved, and I began to hope that, if the rain kept off, the journey might not turn out so miserable as I had expected.

But not long was I allowed to cherish that fond illusion. We had got far beyond the last houses that straggled in the environs of the village, and were fairly "undher the mountain and along by the say," which, for the most part invisible, made its close vicinity known by the crashing roar of its troubled waters, and occasionally even by a far-sent jet of spray, keen and salt, on my face. Even in summer daylight, I remembered, there was along here as dreary a bit of road as need be seen. On the left towered steep the dark mountain, on the right the barren shore was swept by the tide; the road, never of the best, was now terribly cut up by long-continued rains, and ere we had struggled long through the difficulties that beset our progress, I began to feel that the willing little horse was becoming distressed by his efforts to keep his footing among the unseen holes and ruts that he encountered at every step.

At last we came suddenly on a quagmire, into which I felt the animal's fore-feet sink with a drop; terrified, he plunged forward, floundered, splashing me from head to foot, and, stumbling against a stone on the other side, down he came with a heavy, helpless thud, that told only too well how little chance there was of his making much more progress that night.

Poor little horse! as, getting on my feet, I tried to help him to rise, speaking to him caressingly and patting his neck, he murmured a low whinny, and answered by making a violent effort to lift himself—an ineffectual one, so far as its immediate object was concerned—but successful in relieving him of all encumbrance, for snap went the girths, and into the mud rolled the saddle. With another throe he got on his feet, shook himself, and stood drooping and trembling with fear and fatigue, utterly unfit for another mile of travel.

The only thing to be done was to give up all thought of proceeding further, and to try to find some sort of shelter for the night. I tried to recal my recollections of the locality, to strive to remember any house or cottage I had seen in the neighbourhood; for I had a good idea of my whereabouts. At last it occurred to me that, nestling into a sort of nook in the mountain-side, I had seen a house, situated among what might, at one time, have been grounds of its own, though, in proportion as the house had fallen out of repair, the trees and shrubs, the rank grass and brambles, had grown into untrained luxuriance; for the bay here is sheltered, and the mountains protect the shore, so that the vegetation, where the soil permits, is richer than is generally found so close to the sea. I knew, by certain landmarks, that it must be some little way further on; so, passing the rein over my arm, after laying the girthless saddle upon the little horse's back, I, encouraging him, with hand and voice, proceeded slowly to pick my way with extremest difficulty among the obstacles of the road. At last, my search was rewarded. Up on the hill-side, just about where I was pretty sure the house lay, twinkled a light. Now, the question was to find the road or pathway that led to it; for in the darkness it might easily be missed. I came upon it at last—a gateless gap in a low stone wall—and turning up the track, which was little better, just there, than a water-course, with a particularly rugged bottom, over which the poor weary “horse-baste” and I floundered and struggled at every step, we slowly neared the beacon, and, after a weary climb, found ourselves on what had once been a gravel sweep in front of the house. I was greeted by the furious barking of a colley-dog within, which increased in violence as I knocked vigorously at the door.

The light, which had been up till this in a lower room, as I could perceive through a hole in the shutter, was now carried up-stairs, and after two or three repetitions of my summons, a window over the door was opened, and the tremulous voice of an old man demanded my business. This was soon told, and down he

came, opened the door with trembling hands, and admitted me into a good-sized hall, but dark and damp and ruinous.

From the door of the room where I had first seen the light burning issued an old woman.

“Marget,” her husband said, “show the gentleman in to the fire, shure he’s *seepin’* with the wet, and I’ll take the horse round to the stable; and put on a ddrop o’ wather, and make him a tumbler o’ screechin’ hot punch that’ll take the cowl out of his bones.”

“Thru for ye; come in, yer honour,” replied the old woman, dropping a curtsy. “Och, but it’s a crule (cruel) night for a Christian to be out.”

The sight of the fire was sufficient at first to occupy all my attention, and the old dame bustled about, setting on a kettle to boil, taking from the cupboard a bottle of whisky, brown sugar, and a tumbler, and talking cheerily the while. By this time her husband had returned.

“I’ll warrant the horse ’ll be as glad of his supper and his bed as yer honour; throth an’ he’s bate intirely. But what’ll we do for clothes for ye, sur? The sorra a dhry stitch is on ye. Marget,” and he drew the old woman aside, and whispered to her.

She nodded and disappeared.

“There’s a whole wardrobe o’ the best o’ clothes up-stairs, yer honour, that belonged to wan that’s dead and gone: maybe ye wouldn’t mind puttin’ them on while yer own’s dhryin’?”

The proposal was much too good a one to be rejected, and in a few minutes “Marget” reappeared with an armful of what, at a glance, I perceived to be, indeed, “the best o’ clothes,” though of a bygone fashion.

“They’re not damp,” the old woman said. “Niver a fortnight passes, niver a week in wet weather, but I air them. It’s thirty-two years agen Lammas I’ve had the care o’ them, and damp, nor dust, nor moth, hasn’t come near them. Look here, sur, the finest o’ broad-cloth, lined with silk, an’ a velvet collar, an’ iligint pantaloons, an’ a satin waistcoat; and see the silk stockings and the pumps! Ah! the quality doesn’t dhress now as they did when those was made. But get off your wet things, and throw them outside the door, and make yourself comfortable at wanst. Shure Jimmy ’ll stay and valet ye, if ye like; many’s the time he acted body-sarvent to the quality.”

Declining the offer of Jimmy’s services, however, the good old pair withdrew, and in a brief space I found myself metamorphosed into a gentleman of the beginning of the present century in full dress—tight pantaloons, coat-collar up to my ears, short waist, full-topped sleeves, low-quartered dancing-shoes with flou-*rishing* bows; and so ashamed of myself did I feel, that it was some time before I could make up my mind to summon the poor old people out of the cold.

But I need not have felt uneasy. Genuine was their admiration of the change in my appearance.

“Och, but isn’t it a pity that ye wouldn’t be

always dhressed like that, sur! What's the good of a gintleman havin' an iligint pair o' legs entirely, an' them in throusters that has no more shape in them than ombrella-cases? But the wather's boiled now, and I'll make ye a dhop o' whisky-punch."

I gladly accepted the whisky-punch and a piece of oat-cake, which were daintily spread for me on a beautiful damask napkin, and with fine glass and china, and a silver spoon, bearing for crest a chained leopard couchant, and the motto, "Je le tiens."

"Ye'r looking at the crest, sur," said the old woman, who was the chief speaker, anticipating one of the questions I was desirous, yet shy, of asking. "It's a right good ould family as any in the kingdom, though sorely failed, that owned it. Did ye ever, if ye wer' in these parts before, hear tell of the O'Mores?"

"Many a time I have heard the name. This was their house, then?"

"*Wan* o' their houses, for they had three, and this was the smallest. They had a fine estate in the county Watherford, and a grand mansion in Dublin, an' horses, an' carriages, an' sarvents. Och, but it's the pity to see them fine ould families goin' to rack an' ruin, and the mushroom (parvenus) springin' up in their place."

The last of the flourishing O'Mores had been the great-grandfather of the present proprietor, I was told. He had left all the family possessions intact to his son Feargus, whose wildly extravagant habits had encumbered them to some degree with post-obits before his father's death, and continuing the same course after coming into possession, he, during his short and evil career, had contrived to dissipate his fortune to such an extent, that his son Michael continued all his life an embarrassed man, even after the sale of both the Dublin house and the Waterford estate. This was "the ould mather," in whose service Jimmy and Marget had lived as boy and girl, children of his tenants, and in whose praises both were loud and earnest.

But Michael's son, Cornelius—the young mather—as I could gather rather from their tone than from their words, bore little resemblance to his father. Of a gloomy, obstinate, and despotic nature, he made his will absolute to all around him, governing by fear, and carrying out by the force of inflexible determination whatever project he might conceive.

He lived chiefly in Dublin, at whose university he had completed his education, and only came to Rosscreeagh occasionally, with a few friends, for a month's shooting, fishing, or boating.

"At last," pursued Marget, "news come that the young mather was bringin' us home a wife, an' orders that the place was to be done up, inside and out, from top to bottom. An' workmen come from Belfast, an' gardeners, an' och! but we were up an' at work late an' airy to get all ready in time. At last, down they come, the mather an' the mistress, as handsome a couple as ye'd see in a month o' Sundays,

an' a body sarvent, an' a lady's-maid, an' three or four others beside.

"The mistress wasn't above eighteen to look at, dark an' bright-eyed, an' quick-spoken, an' seemingly with a way an' a will of her own. 'Twasn't long she kep' it, poor young thing!

"She wasn't of no family at all to spake of—her father was a banker in Dublin—but she had money, an' she was purty enough for any man to be took with her, if she'd been a milkmaid. She sang beautiful too, an' played the harp, that it was better than goin' to the play to hear an' to see her, with her lovely hands an' arrums on the shtrings. An' ride—she'd ride any horse in the country-side.

"But she niver liked the place; that was the only thing in her that went agen us; for she was affable enough to everybody, in a sort of short, spoiled-child way. An' she an' the mather didn't always get on just as owld sarvents, like Jimmy an' me—we weren't owld then, but we were owld in the service—liked to see. She had a sort o' sharp, wilful manner with him, when he wanted or didn't want her to do something she was set agen or set upon, and he was with her as he was with everybody that opposed him, cold an' hard an' fixed-like; an' that brought storms, but she always went to the wall, an' had to give in to him.

"She was just like a child in a passion when she was put out; she didn't care what she said, or who heard her, an' she'd cry, before the sarvents or any one, right out and sob, an' shake her showllders, an' that used to make the mather madder than anything. He'd get white and set his teeth and thremble with the rage, an' look at her as if he'd like to strik her, poor, passionate, foolish gairl that she was! Then when she came to, she'd be ready enough—at first especially, to make it up again; but the mather wouldn't, and many's the time he'd be two an' three days, hardly spakin' to her, good or bad.

"She'd say to me—she was always 'specially free with me, the poor thing—'He's in the sulks again, Margaret; I don't know how to please him, and I'm gettin' not to care. I wish I was far away, far away from this place! I'm sick of the say and the mountain, and never any wan to speak to, and *him* as sulky as a bear! What could I say till her? If I tried to bid her take patience, or to comfort her, she'd only make answer, she *couldn't* take patience, she never had, and as to preachin' to her, it only bothered her worse.

"Well, at last there come down from Dublin a houseful o' company, and the thought o' the change, an' the preparation, seemed to set her up again, an' she was full of a sort of childish excitement.

"There was a young couple, the lady havin' been a friend of hers before she married, a Mrs. Kavanagh, and her sister, and two young gentlemen, comerades of the mather, that had been down here in the bachelor days, an' a cousin o' the mistress's, a Mr. Barry O'Brian. Well, everything went smoothly, to all appearance; the mather wasn't the man to let the

company see him an' his wife wasn't on the best o' terms, an' she was always occupied with her guests; there was parties on the wather, and ridin' and dhivin', and dinners to all the quality within fifteen miles round, and the place was fairly turned upside down. Misther O'Brian had got a boat, a sizeable sort o' yacht, with a cabin big enough to dine them all, and even a sleepin' cabin or two, an' they used to go about in that, an' visit the coast, and sometimes, if the wind was contrairy, they'd be out all night.

"Well, at last there was to be a break-up of the party, an' before they went was to be given a dance, and all the gentlefolks that could be got was invited, and the grandest o' preparations made; and the mistress, savin' yer presence, was like a hen on a hot griddle, couldn't be still an instant, but to an' fro, up an' down for ever, with a wild, faverish sort o' shir about her, that it made me onaisy to see her.

"The day before the party, comes down from Dublin a box for Mr. O'Brian. He'd giv' especial orders to his man that whenever it come it should be took up straight to his room. Well, sur, ye know, maybe, what sarvents is; Pat Rooney, that brought it from Newry, he come into the kitchen with it just as we were finishin' dinner, an' in coorse he sat down to have a bite an' a sup, and Lorrigan, that's Mr. O'Brian's man, he asks him the news, an' this an' that; an' the box, stood on a side-table, was in the kitchen; and wand looks at it, an' another lifts it, an' another passes a remark on it, an' so 'most every wan in the kitchen had noticed the box. An' at long last Misther Lorrigan, havin' had his chat out, takes the box and goes up to his masther's room with it.

"In the evenin' Mr. O'Brian meets Delany, the mistress's maid, on the stairs, an', says he, off-hand like, 'Oh, Delany, just come to my room, will ye? I've got a little parcel to send to yer mistress,' says he. So Delany went, an' he gives her the very box that come in the mornin'. 'Take that to yer mistress, with my love,' says he.

"Delany, off she goes, hot fut, thinking she'd be the first of us to see what was in the box, when out comes the masther from his study, quite quiet and unexpected, as was always his way. 'What's that?' says he. Delany towld him. 'I'm goin' to yer mistress's room in a minute,' says he, 'an' I'll take it myself.' So she had to give it up, not best plased to be disappointed, and the masther, he turns back into the study, an' shuts the doore; an' Delany comes down-stairs, for she knew if she towld the mistress she'd call her a slow-coach an' a stupid, an' what not, niver heed in' any excuses.

"Well, we heer'd no more of the box till next day, when all of a sudden the mistress's bell rang hard and sharp, an' up runs Delany in a hurry. The mistress was standin' by the dhressin'-table with the box open before her, and she'd tuk out of it the loveliest wreath of pink haith (heath) ever ye saw, and was lookin' at it.

"Who brought this box here?" says she,

turning round in her sharp way on Delany. 'I don't know, ma'am,' says the gairl. Lady's-maids is always ready with a lie—though, indeed, it was only a white one, for she didn't know, not for *sartin*, who put the box there, though she guessed pretty well. It's frightened she was, expectin' the mistress would cross-question her till she got it all out of her. But she said niver another word but 'Ye may go;' an' off went Delany, glad to get off so aisy.

"It was always allowed to me, when the mistress was dressin' for a party, to come an' give any help that might be wanted, especially if there was ladies stayin' in the house that had no maids, an' required Delany to do their hair, or anything of that kind for them, an' it was a pleasure to me to see her, she looked that lovely when she was dhressed. Well, this night, Miss Moore, Mrs. Kavanagh's sither, was to have her hair done by Delany, and when I come into the mistress's room she was thryin' on the wreath on her lovely dark curls—ladies in them days mostly always wore their hair curled all over their heads—an' she turned round, an' her eyes was shinin' an' her cheeks glowin', that it was just a sight to see how lovely she was.

"Ah, ma'am,' says I, 'but your wreath sets you well!' 'Ay, doesn't it?' says she; 'isn't it a different thing to this wan?' takin' up despin'ly a white one, an' lettin' it dhrop on the table again. I said no more, for I remembered the masther had given her the white wreath.

"Well, I finished dhressin' her, an' settlin' the flowers on her head. Oh, but ye'd think it was natural they wer', jist gathered out of a greenhouse—and down she went.

"Presently all the company come flockin', an' the dancin' commenced: then come supper, an' after supper, when some o' the owldher wans was gone, they began playin' games, hide-an'-seek, an' what not. All at wanst I remembered that when I come down from the mistress's room, the windows, it bein' a summer evenin', had been left open, an' I thought that very likely Delany an' the housemaid had been that busy helpin' down-stairs, as, in coorse, we all had, that they might niver have been up to shut them. So up I goes without a candle, shuts them—for, sure enough, it's open they wer'—when just as I was comin' down, some one rushes into the room, whisks by me in the dark—och, me heart give a lep!—an' goes sthright to a closet, where cloaks and dhresses was hung up. I could hear them, whoever it was—I didn't know *then*—take somethin' out, shut the cupboard, an' start again to the door; there—for it was light enough outside—I saw it was the mistress; an' at the very same moment the masther meets her, face to face.

"She give a sort o' gasp. 'Hush!' says he, takin' her by the wrist, an' without another word they walks out together, an' I heer'd him take her into his dhressin'-room, and shut the door, an' turn the key. The married ladies looked, an' nodded, an' whispered among themselves, an' wan or two o' them gave the masther joy, an' then the carriages was called, an' the

party broke up. An' next day all the visitors staying in the house went away too.

"From that day a change come over the poor thing that niver cleared away. She seemed cowed-like, all the sperrit taken out of her; she hardly ever went out, an' niver was allowed to sthir over the threshold her lone. By degrees—I can't tell how or when or where it first got wind—there came a whisper that she wasn't althegither right in the head, that there was madness in the family, an' that she was goin' like the rest. Afore long the masther come to take that view of it, an' watched her and kep' her closer than ever. I don't know: althered she was, but I niver see anything that looked like madness about her: she always seemed to me like wan stricken with some terrible fear an' sorrow, an' hopelessness—like wan who found their life broke, and give in intirely.

"But maybe I was wrong, an' that that was the form the madness took with her. Anyway, the masther, who ought to know better nor we did, looked upon it as a hopeless case from the first, an' as time went by, an' she got worse instead of better, he said it wasn't safe for her to be about the house, an' she was shut up in two rooms, her own bedroom an' the little sittin'-room next it. She didn't seem to heed much. Anyway, she niver complained to any of us; in summer she'd sit by the window for hours, lookin' at the say, dhramin', dhramin'; an' in winther she'd hang over the fire, sittin' in a low chair, rooking herself to and fro slowly, like wan in pain. Sometimes she'd take a fit of writin', and write away by the hour, but she seldom did anything else.

"Three years she went on like that; 'fadin', fadin' slowly, an' then she died, an' was buried with a funeral more fit for wan of us.

"Aftther her death, the masther went away, and niver came back to Rosscreagh to live. Sometimes he'd arrive all of a sudden, stay a day or two, or three, to thransact business with the agent, but as time went on, it was seldomer and seldomer he came. Most of the sarvents—Delany among the rest—had been discharged, by ones or twos, from the time when the mistress began to be talked of as gettin' out of her mind. At last no wan was left but Jimmy an' me, an' we had the care of the house, an' a lonely place it was an' is, only now we've got used to it.

"It's going on for eight-an'-twenty year now, when news came the masther was dead—an' how d'ye think? killed in a juel (duel) by Mr. Barry O'Brian, the mistress's own cousin.

"Well, then there came a dispute about the ownership of the place, an' it was threw into Chancery, whativer that may be, an' in Chancery it is to this day, an' 'll remain till Doomsday, as I b'lieve. And there, sur, 's the story of Rosscreagh House, for the last thirty an' odd years; an' sure it's long past twelve, it is, an' won't ye go to your bed? I just made it up in the mistress's room, as bein' the best in the house. Ye won't be scarred (scared), will ye?"

I assured her there was no danger of my being "scarred," and now, feeling for the first

time how stiff and fatigued I was, I, unintentionally waking Jimmy from the profound slumber into which he had fallen at an early period of the narrative, followed Marget up-stairs into the room prepared for me.

Bright enough it looked, with the fire flashing on walls and furniture; but a damp, shut-up smell told of desertion and decay. When, too, candles were lighted, stained patches became visible on the faded paper; the carpet had been removed, the curtains and the draperies of the toilet taken down, and cold and stiff and heavy looked the old-fashioned furniture, denuded of all that had given it grace and ornament.

"Och ho! but the place is sorely changed." Marget exclaimed, as if this brief installation of an inhabitant seemed to bring the fact more completely before her. "Ye'd not know the room for the same as when she used to be in it in the airly days. "An' here," opening a door, "is her sittin'-room, where she used to sit at the last, writin', writin' for hours at yon table. There's some o' the papers, I b'lieve, in the drawers yet. The masther burnt most o' them and locked up the rest, intendin', I suppose, to look over them when he had laysure; but the time never come, and there they are."

I looked round the once pretty room, marked, like the bedroom, with the stamp of a bygone prosperity, the absence of the feminine prettinesses and comforts that of old gave it its chief charm leaving it a very corpse. The moral, no less than the physical atmosphere of the room, made me shiver.

"Sure an' it's time ye wer' in yer warm bed," said Marget, seeing the involuntary motion. "Niver sthir in the mornin' till I come to light yer fire an' bring ye the hot wather. Good night to ye, sur, an' I hope it's sleep sound ye will."

She was gone, and I hastily divested myself of my ridiculous costume, and got into bed as quickly as I could.

But my sleep was painfully uneasy and interrupted. The strange place, the howling blast and the dashing rain that shook the rattling windows, the dismal roar of the sea, above all, the haunting remembrance of the tale I had heard of her whose young life had faded out in this very room, who had drawn her last breath in this very bed, kept me in a state of feverish unrest. Between sleeping and waking, the idea of her acquired an actuality, a reality, as of a bodily presence; and by degrees came upon me a desire, growing gradually into an intense longing, to know all that was yet unveiled, though so strongly suggested in the old servant's narrative. At last the feeling grew so strong on me as to rouse me into that state of nervous excitable unrest that allows of no soothing, that will be quieted by no lullaby, that makes him it possesses feel that he is compelled to be up and doing. I remembered Margaret's hint about the papers. Could it—supposing I were able, without effraction, to come upon something to throw a gleam of light on this strange, sad story—could it be a serious lapse of conscience

to look over the writings of this poor girl, dead more than thirty years ago, forgotten, probably, by all but these two old servants? I hardly know; then my ardent feverish curiosity settled the question in the negative, and, piling more turf on the dying fire, I proceeded to the next room, and began to try the drawers of the writing-table. Those that yielded to my hand were empty; all the rest were locked. Suddenly an idea occurred to me. I knew well, by experience, the tendency papers packed tight into drawers have to slip down behind them. Instantly I reopened those I had just closed in despair, withdrew them from their grooves, and there, sure enough, lay behind them numbers of papers, dusty, and crushed, and discoloured, but still, as a glance assured me, perfectly legible. Possessing myself of the treasure, I carried it into the next room, sat down by the fire, and began to sort the papers, in so far as they were sortable—not a very promising task, as many of them were merely old letters of no interest to any one now, and various odd sheets, some torn, and nearly all more or less crumpled and defaced.

But my search was not to go unrewarded. After some trouble, I found that many of the papers constituted part of a diary which the perusal of a few lines showed to be unmistakably that of Mrs. O'More.

Carefully smoothing, arranging, setting in such consecutive order as their fragmentary condition permitted, I made out the missing links of the story, and here, from subsequent transcription, give such extracts from the journal as either its mutilated state permitted, or my judgment as to the amount of light they threw on Margaret's narrative, considered it necessary to produce. Where omissions occurred from the former cause, I shall mark them by breaks, abrupt as they actually existed in the history, where from the latter by asterisks. I must begin with a fragment.

"—forced to yield. I have long known I had not my father's love—my dead mother's I never knew—but I was little prepared for such relentless tyranny. He was the only person I ever feared, but I have a terrible presentiment that I shall one day have cause to fear my husband too. The resolute way in which he has pursued me, ignoring steadily all my discouragement, refusing to pay heed to my acknowledgment of love for another, satisfied to take me at my father's hands, make me tremble for the future. Already I feel at times that he has over my will a sort of paralyzing power; I try to withstand the influence, to brave him; but my feeble, impulsive nature falls like wind before a steady rain. Will B. understand how all this miserable marriage has come about? Will he—but how can he?—know that I have been forced away from him, dragged, without power of resistance, into this dark, strong current? How can he know, how can he believe, that in absence I was faithful to him every hour; that my heart never, for an instant, swerved in its allegiance to him; that if I could I would have died rather than have

given him up, and married this man? But I could not die. We talk of dying as if it were such an easy resource and escape! But, in the midst of all, youth and strength made life too vigorous in me to be extinguished even by such suffering.

"May 10. The spring comes, even to this place, and the summer follows; the sea is blue, blue, and the sky without a cloud, and even the dark mountain takes the sun, and gives forth its stunted herbage, and the bleating of the sheep on its flank, and the tinkle of their bells make music. And though I hate he place, and dread its isolation, I feel how young and strong I am, and that I must go forth and feel the spring. Ah, if I had a child! No, no, God forbid! A child of *mine*, with the worse than deadly heritage I have to give it!—a child of *his*, the man I hate and fear! No! better *any* amount of loneliness than *that*!

"Madness! Yes, that is what a child of mine may . . .

" . . . So I wandered on, on, little knowing or caring where I went, till I came to the 'big stone,' and under its shadow I sat down to rest. Beneath me lay the pine-wood, and below that spread the fair, sunny fields, and lawns, and shrubberies of Rosstrevor House, sloping softly to the sea, lying sparkling and rippling in the sun. The sight calmed me, and seemed to lay a stillness on my troubled, angry heart, till I began to forget the scene of the morning. And then came a heavy black cloud across the sun, and a rushing, whistling wind swept round the big stone, and made me shiver, and all the peace and brightness were gone, and in me and without me the storm began to arise. I rose, and turned towards the other side of the mountain, and there, as I well knew, all was gloom and terror, peaks, and chasms, and barrenness, and down close below, the sea, no longer smiling but rising in wrath and torment beneath the lashing squall. Then came the rain. Oh, such rain! sweeping, blinding, driving. I stopped, for it was impossible to make head against it, or see a yard before me, and I knew that if I attempted to advance, the chances were that I should fall into one of the many abysses that lay around. And for an instant in that thought sprung up a fierce temptation so to be rid of it all! But I was only a woman, and a coward, as we all are at heart, the bravest of us, I do believe, and a foolish, commonplace recollection frightened me from it.

"I remembered one of the mountain shepherds telling me he had missed a sheep for three days, and at the end of that time he had found it fallen over a rock into a crevasse. With the help of other shepherds he got it out, but the poor thing, though still alive when they brought it to the top, died in a few hours from starvation and the injuries it had received. Now, if I could be sure of ending all at once! But how could I? and to lie, perhaps, for days and nights in the cold hard depths of one of those chasms, seeing nothing but the sky overhead, watching it darkening, and the cold stars coming out, and the day breaking, and dying

again, while I, bruised, broken, starving, knew there was no change and no help for me! So I waited till the rain went by, and drenched and streaming, and thinking of the sheep, I very cautiously picked my way home, taking the utmost care of my precious life and limbs, and half laughing at myself the while that I was willingly and knowingly going back to my bitter, endless pain of heart, choosing it instead of a few hours, or even it might be days, of pain of body!

* * * * *

"How shall I bear it? He, my husband, has asked my one and only and ever-beloved lover into this house! And Barry has accepted, and is coming with the rest.

"Does Cornelius know that Barry was the man I loved? I never breathed his name to Cornelius, and perhaps he only knows him as my cousin. That would seem the natural explanation, but all his ways are so dark and tortuous, that it is impossible to guess at the motives of his actions. Well, things must take their course, and some one must be sacrificed, *who* remains to be seen. Why does Barry accept? Why does he put me in this position? How cruel! And yet, knowing nothing of the circumstances of my marriage, how cruel he must think *me*—how deserving of all the pain and humiliation he can inflict on me! Perhaps, too, he may have some guess at the truth, and wants to judge for himself how far I am innocent or guilty. And if he does learn . . .

" . . . all the hopelessness of the situation he *will* not see, and oh, how can I withstand him? I feel I am being dragged on, on, and I have nothing—God help me—to cling to.

"September 17. The first time I have opened my journal since June. Let me go back, and think of what has happened to change the whole course of my life since I wrote that last paragraph. I must do something to keep my mind from wandering. Yes, the ball, that was what brought it all about. The day before, coming into my room from a walk with Mary, I found a box on my dressing-table; opening it, it contained a wreath of pink heath, and a letter in Barry's writing. Ah! the leap my heart made, as it used to do in the old days, at the sight!

"He asked me to fly with him; that was the tenor of it. If I consented, I was to wear the wreath at the ball—if not, the white one my husband last gave me; so I was to signify the choice between them. If I wore the pink, I was to propose games after supper—hide-and-seek—and when it was my turn to hide, I was to go to my room, take a hat and cloak, and a bundle of such things as I immediately required, and slip down the back stairs; there he and one of his boatmen, on whom he could rely, would take me down to the beach, we should embark at once, and be out of the bay before suspicion was awakened. If I wore the white wreath, he would leave Roscreagh the next day, as had been arranged, and would never trouble

me more. Thus, briefly told, the long, passionate, earnest letter spoke. Before next night my mind was made up—to wear the pink wreath.

"Ah, his face when I entered the room with it on! How the evening went by I cannot tell; I was in a dream, but I never lost my presence of mind, or forgot for a moment how and when everything was to be done.

"At last—the final step was to be taken—I rushed to my room, took from a closet the things I wanted, and, at the door, met—my husband! In his face, in the grasp he laid on my arm—the bruise remained for days—I read all.

"He led me, unresistingly and helpless, to his dressing-room, shut and locked the door. 'Take off that wreath,' he said. I obeyed. 'Now'—placing writing materials before me—'write as I shall dictate.' 'Never!' I answered. 'Write!' And he grasped my arm again, and crushed me down into a seat before the table, and put the pen into my trembling fingers, once more saying, 'Write!' And I wrote as he bid me.

"'I have changed my mind. I cannot go with you. Forgive me. Keep the wreath; it is the last token that can ever pass between us.'

"NORA."

"Then my husband deliberately put the flowers and the note into the box, which he had already possessed himself of, and again taking my arm, led me, as he would a child, back to my room. 'Go to bed,' he said; and went out, locking the door behind him.

"I never saw Barry more, and never shall to the day I die.

* * * * *

"November 30. I hope I may die soon. I no longer feel that upspringing of strong young life in me that used to assure me, often so unwelcomely, that death and I had nothing in common. Now it seems as if the principle of life were slowly dying down, for all feeling is numbed within me. Joy, of course, there is no more for me on earth, but pain, fear, and anger are nearly as dead. My husband gives out that the curse of my race has fallen upon me—that I am mad. I care not; the confinement he imagines he imposes on me is quite as much a matter of choice as of necessity on my part. I—"

Here ended the part of the manuscript that related the actual events of the poor lady's life; the few remaining pages were merely fragments written at intervals during the weary years that she had waited for death.

They certainly bore no traces of insanity, but it was easy to comprehend how the broken spirit had succumbed, and been made to lend itself to the plans of a man so cruel, so determined, and so utterly unscrupulous.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

BOOK III.

CHAPTER IX.

Soft you now ;

The fair Ophelia.

AMONGST the notabilities of the gentry in the neighbourhood of Kilclare was a certain Lady Popham, a wealthy and eccentric widow, who owned a fine estate, one of the park gates of which opened into the high road that led from Ballyhacket to Kilclare. Lady Popham had resided many years abroad, chiefly in Italy, with her husband, a languid, invalid, fine gentleman, who found, or fancied, that a southern climate was necessary to his existence. Her ladyship had consequently been an absentee for a very long period. On Sir Bernard Popham's death, however, his widow returned rich and childless to Ireland, and announced her intention of residing permanently on her Kilclare estate. At first her advent occasioned a great deal of talk and excitement amongst her country neighbours. Lady Popham's peculiarities were the theme of conversation at most dinner-tables around Kilclare for some weeks. Some were shocked, some angry, some amused by her oddities ; but, by degrees, as the genuine goodness and warm-heartedness of her character became known, and as people became accustomed to her eccentricities, all that was odd, outré, or unusual, was set down simply to "foreign manners," and excused accordingly. And at the date of my story there was no more popular or respected individual in the county than old Lady Popham of Cloncoolin.

Lady Popham was known far and wide as a liberal, if not very intelligent encourager of art and artists, and was a staunch patroness of the drama. She had already been twice to the theatre at Kilclare during the present season, and had on each occasion graciously signified to Mr. Moffatt her high satisfaction with the performances, all which was profitable and pleasant to the manager, and would have been quite perfect but for one unfortunate circumstance, which dashed his cup of content with bitterness. It had been observed that when Miss Moffatt was singing that popular and touching ballad of the

modern domestic school, entitled "Johnny left me in the lane," Lady Popham, after listening for a second or so, unfurled a very large green fan, behind whose ample shade she retired completely during the song, nor issued forth into the gaslight again until "Johnny" had finally left off leaving Miss Moffatt in the lane, when her ladyship emerged from obscurity with a cheerful countenance. This was certainly not pleasant ; and poor Mr. Moffatt had to bear the brunt of his daughter's ill humour and mortification. However, Lady Popham was too valuable a friend and supporter of the theatre for the manager to be able to afford to show any resentment at this slight to Miss Annette's vocal abilities ; and he consoled the latter by saying that "nobody minded what old Lady Popham said or did," and that she was generally supposed to be "a little touched in the upper story."

Touched or not, however, it was very well known that the sight of the Cloncoolin liveries at the box-office in the morning was sufficient to fill the house at night ; and Mr. Wilfred J. Percival had sent a sort of circular to her ladyship setting forth that his benefit was fixed to take place on the following Friday evening, and begging Lady Popham to honour him by her presence and support on the occasion. This she had promised to do, and moreover to bring with her a party of friends that were staying at Cloncoolin ; and great was the excitement amongst the company as the evening approached, and rose-coloured were the visions of cash and credit to be won, in the minds of manager Moffatt and the *beneficénaire*.

At Biddy Bonny's, too, the whole household was much interested in the forthcoming performance of Hamlet, and especially in the new Ophelia. Teddy Molloy, as he sat in the workshop tapping away at the sole of a "brogue," held forth to his apprentices on the merits of the various Hamlets he had seen when he himself was a 'prentice in Dublin, and expressed his opinion that Miss Bell would be "the purtiest and illigantest Ophaylia" that had ever appeared on the boards of the Kilclare theatre. And the two apprentices related how they'd heard that Lady Popham and "heaps of the quality" were to grace the boxes with their presence. Even old Joe Bonny seemed to catch a faint reflex of the prevailing glow of

excitement, and growled out sundry reminiscences of how he had "see'd 'Amlet acted nigh upon a matter of fifty year ago in England." He was sure it must have been Hamlet, because he remembered there "were a ghost in it, with a kind of a tin-pot on his head." But, on being pressed with interrogations by Biddy, it turned out that this striking evidence of the play having been Hamlet was not so conclusive as old Joe supposed, for the performance had taken place at Bartholomew Fair, where ghosts—even ghosts with tin-pots on their heads—are known to have been numerous.

The rehearsals of the tragedy had gone off very satisfactorily. Mabel had indeed been a little surprised at the complicated and minute instructions given to her by Mr. Percival as to the exact spot on which she must stand during the scenes between Hamlet and Ophelia; when she must turn her head towards him, and when she must look away; how many steps she must take in this direction, and how many in the other; and so forth. But she endeavoured to remember and comply with his injunctions.

"Percival's business in Hamlet is capital," said Mr. Snell, the low comedian. "All his own, too. I don't know another Hamlet on the stage with such business in the play scene."

"Sir," remarked Mrs. Darling, with much stateliness, "I do not admire it. I may be in error, but I deem that over-elaboration is a fault. I have seen John Kemble, in my youth, and Edmund Kean in his best days, and I do not think that they depended for their success on their business."

"Oh, hang it!" returned Mr. Snell (who was without any veneration for the traditions of the old school, and who professed his belief that half the famous actors of the past generation "would be jolly well hissed if they came bow-wowing on to the boards of the London stage now-a-days"), "Oh, hang it! Mrs. Darling, one must have something new, you know. Can't keep on in the old grooves for ever."

"What do they mean by Mr. Percival's capital business in Hamlet, aunt?" asked Mabel that day, after rehearsal.

Before his mother could reply, Jack began:

"Why, they mean that kind of Scotch reel he dances with everybody, Mabel. In and out, backwards and forwards, up the middle and down again. He crosses the stage nineteen times in that scene with you. I counted them."

"The business of a part, Mabel," said Aunt Mary, "is, properly speaking, its dumb show, its pantomime. You know every one has his own ideas as to his movement and position with regard to the other characters."

"Pantomime with a vengeance!" exclaimed Jack, who was inveterate against the eminent tragedian "from the principal theatres, &c. &c."

"He does everything but tumble head over heels; and I shouldn't be surprised to see him do that before the evening's over. A

somersault over Ophelia's grave would be striking, and *new*. That's his great notion."

"Don't be severe, Jack; I don't like to hear it," said gentle, good-natured Aunt Mary.

But Mabel, in her heart, was inclined to agree with her cousin.

At length arrived the eventful Friday evening. The play was to begin at seven o'clock, and long before that hour the pit and gallery were filled with an expectant crowd. The boxes, too, began to show a sprinkling of visitors; and the gap of empty crimson benches in the centre of the semicircle attracted great attention; for it was known that those seats were reserved for Lady Popham and her party. About two minutes before seven the box doors were thrown open with a mighty clatter, and the plunging of hoofs and rolling of wheels was heard coming up from the outside of the theatre. A gay party of ladies and gentlemen entered and took their seats, and in the very centre—for Sir Bernard Popham's widow had no idea of hiding her light under a bushel—sat the lady of Cloncoolin, looking about the theatre with a heavy gold eye-glass, and uttering her remarks upon everything and everybody in a shrill, penetrating little voice. Lady Popham was a very small fragile old woman of nearly seventy years of age; upright as a dart, bright-eyed, nimble-tongued, active. She wore a double range of false teeth, which seemed a little too large for her mouth, and made her lisp in her speech, and a jet black wig with stiff curls that framed her small wizened face on each side. She had the tiniest hands and feet in the world, and was always dressed in the richest stuffs and brightest colours that she could find. On the present occasion she wore an amber brocaded silk gown and a white cashmere cloak on her shoulders; a wreath of artificial roses was perched on the top of her wig, and trembled at every movement of her restless little head. A grotesque figure enough, one would say; and yet it is a fact that Lady Popham, however ridiculous she might appear, possessed that indefinable air of good breeding which stamped her as a gentlewoman, and she could, moreover, assume when she chose a dignified, lofty bearing that was quite imposing.

On the evening of Mr. Percival's benefit, however, she was neither lofty nor dignified; but very good humoured and talkative, turning her big eye-glass hither and thither, and nodding right and left to her friends and neighbours as they took their seats around her.

Punctually at seven o'clock the orchestra began the overture. It was, of course, a selection of Irish airs, but newly chosen, and arranged by Mr. Trescott, who possessed, from long practice and experience, some skill in such patchwork.

"Jerry the Buck" figured in it as a matter of course; and the stamping of feet keeping time to it in the gallery overhead, made the

theatre quiver until it seemed quite within the bounds of possibility that the flooring would give way, and a pair of corduroy-clad legs be seen hovering over Lady Popham's floral head-gear! However, no such disaster took place, and "Jerry the Buck" came to an end in due course, giving place to an old pathetic melody with a wailing burden to it in a minor key. Scarcely had the first few notes of it been played when the house was hushed into breathless silence. The air had been arranged as a violin solo, and the player was Alfred Trescott. Excited by the consciousness of performing to cultivated and attentive ears, the young man threw himself completely into the spirit of the music. Those exquisitely sympathetic tones, of which the violin alone, amongst instruments, has the secret, rose through the theatre with a sweet, sad yearning plaint that was inexpressibly pathetic. The tune was wild and irregular, like the sighing of the wind over some desolate place; and when, at its close, the last long-drawn note had died away, there was for a second profound and absolute silence throughout the house. Then burst forth a storm of applause, led by Lady Popham herself, who leant over the front of the box daintily wiping her moistened eyes with a laced handkerchief, and strenuously beating her fan on the box-ledge with her other hand. "Bis, bis, bis!" cried her ladyship's shrill voice. "Make him play it again, somebody. Mais c'est charmant. *É* *quisito*. I'm perfectly astonished. Why don't somebody make him play it again?"

The whole audience having by this time joined in shouts of "Ankoor! ankoor!" accompanied by much clapping of hands and stamping of feet, and encouraging exclamations of "More power to ye! Give it us again, me boy! Sure it's yourself that can fiddle, any way, &c.," Alfred repeated the air, terminating it this time by an improvised cadenza, with a long-drawn shake at the end of it, which raised even still greater enthusiasm.

The applause had scarcely yet subsided, when the curtain rose upon the platform of the castle at Elsinore, and the tragedy of Hamlet fairly commenced. The play progressed smoothly and successfully. The hero of the night, Mr. Wilfred J. Percival, was received with all due recognition of his position as *bénéficiaire*. The new Ophelia was greeted on her first entrance with such unexpected heartiness as to destroy her self-possession for a time, and the first few words she had to say were nearly inaudible. But she soon recovered, and performed the rest of the scene with grace and sweetness. There was a stir of expectation throughout the theatre when Mabel entered for the mad scene, decked with wild flowers and straw, and with her rich dark hair falling dishevelled about her shoulders. On coming to the theatre that evening, she had found in her dressing-room a large basket full of natural wild flowers, woven into fantastic garlands with ivy and creeping plants, and on the top was laid a scrap of paper, with these words

written in Corda Trescott's round childish hand:

"Please, please to wear these to-night. Alfred gathered them this morning, and I have twisted them together all myself.

"Your affectionate little friend,
"CORDA."

"Very kind and thoughtful, indeed, of young Trescott," said Aunt Mary; "and how prettily they are arranged."

"I suppose I can't refuse to wear them," said Mabel, musingly.

"Goodness, Mabel! Refuse? Of course not. Why should you?"

To this question Mabel had made no reply, and accordingly, when the time came for attiring her for the mad scenes, Mrs. Walton twined the wreaths in Mabel's hair, and looped them on to her white dress, and pronounced the effect to be quite perfect.

And a very charming and poetical picture of the distraught Ophelia she presented, as she stood in the centre of the stage, pouring out the snatches of song in a voice to which nervousness lent a touching tremor. The girl's fresh youth and natural refinement, and the unalloyed simple earnestness with which she had thrown herself into the character she was representing, made her seem the very embodiment of the poet's graceful fancy; and when she finally left the stage, after the last pathetic scene with Laertes, there were few eyes in the house undimmed with tears. In brief, the performance was a complete and unmistakable success.

Lady Popham was in ecstasies. She sent for Mr. Moffatt to come and speak with her after the conclusion of the play, and desired he would convey her best congratulations and thanks to Miss M. A. Bell, for the delight she had afforded herself and her friends. "And that charming creature that played the fiddle!" exclaimed Lady Popham. "Where *did* you pick up these two young artists, Moffatt? I tell you that boy is a genius; and I know something about the matter. I must have him out at Cloncoolin. What's his name? Trescott? Ah, well, I never remember people's names. Write it down and send it to me, will you? I shall be obliged to you. And look here, Moffatt, make that pretty sweet poetical Ophelia of yours take a benefit, and I'll promise to come and bring half the county. She is really delicious. You won't be able to keep her *here* very long, of course. You're prepared for that, eh? Well, make the most of her now, and let me know in good time about her benefit."

All the party from Cloncoolin followed her ladyship's cue, and Mr. Moffatt retired amidst a chorus of "Really charming. Quite delighted. So pleased. Does you great credit, Moffatt," and so forth.

"Well, Mabel, my darling child," said Aunt Mary, giving her niece a hearty hug and a kiss when they were all at home once more in the little sitting-room, "you've surpassed my ex-

pectations. It's all right now. Quite safe. You must get poor old aunty an engagement to play the Nurse to your Juliet, when you're a great actress in London, setting the town on fire."

"Oh, Aunt Mary!"

"Yes, to be sure you must. But in all seriousness, Mabel, I've no doubt in the world that Moffatt will gladly engage you for next season; and I think you are pretty sure of getting to Dublin for the winter."

Mabel went to rest with a thankful heart, and her last thought was of her mother and Dooley. Her last thought, but not her sole thought. There ran through her mind a lurking wonder as to what Clement Charlewood would say and think if he could have seen her as Ophelia. Whether he would have been pleased, or shocked, or indifferent.

"I'm afraid he disapproves of the whole thing so much, that he would rather I was unsuccessful than the reverse," thought Mabel. "At least he would have felt in that way three months ago. Perhaps it might be different with him now—now that—other things are all different too!"

CHAPTER X. LADY POPHAM'S LETTER.

"WHY, goodness me, Aunt Dawson, look at this now! I declare here's a letter from my fairy godmother."

The words were uttered in a frank ringing voice, and with the least touch of an Irish accent, and the speaker was Miss Geraldine O'Brien, first cousin to Augusta Charlewood's affianced husband. Miss O'Brien was a tall elegant-looking young woman, whose finely-formed though somewhat massive figure was admirably set off by the closely-fitting riding habit which she wore. Her face was not strictly handsome, but beaming with health and good humour, and lighted by a pair of merry intelligent blue eyes, and she had a great abundance of glossy chesnut hair bound tightly round her well-shaped head.

The inmates of Bramley Manor were assembled at an early luncheon, and the party consisted of the Charlewood family—including Walter, who was at Hammerham on leave of absence—Mrs. Dawson, with her son and niece, and the Reverend Decimus Fluke and his two elder daughters. Jane Fluke, indeed, was staying at Bramley Manor, for she was to have the distinguished honour of being one of Augusta's bridesmaids, and was to remain in the house until after the wedding. Miss Fluke and her father had been invited to luncheon on this day, for an excursion had been arranged to some famous ruins about ten miles from Hammerham, and they had been asked to be of the party. At first it had been proposed to take refreshments with them, and make a sort of pic-nic. But Mrs. Charlewood had strongly objected to this plan, saying that she never could enjoy her food out in the open air, and especially on the grass, where the insects swarmed over the dishes, and one never could use one's knife and fork com-

fortably. And as Mrs. Dawson seemed inclined to agree with this view of the case—although she by no means stated her reasons with the same downright simplicity as her hostess—the idea of the pic-nic had been abandoned, and it had been arranged that they should start for the ruins immediately after luncheon, and after rambling about there, return comfortably in the evening to dinner. Miss O'Brien, Walter, and Clement were to go on horseback, and therefore the former appeared at the table ready equipped in her riding-habit, which was to her the most becoming costume possible.

"A letter from my dear, delightful, ridiculous, old fairy godmother!" exclaimed Miss O'Brien, gleefully, as she opened a letter which the servant had just brought in, together with a large packet of correspondence for Mr. Charlewood. "I hadn't heard from her for an age, and was getting quite uneasy about her, for her ladyship is generally the most indefatigable and voluminous of correspondents. She prides herself on her letters, and they certainly are capital fun."

"Her ladyship?" said Mr. Charlewood, pausing in the act of opening a large square blue business-looking envelope, and looking across at his guest. Mr. Charlewood caught at the sweet sound of the title as a hungry pike snaps at a bait. "Her ladyship, Miss O'Brien?" said he.

"Lady Popham, Mr. Charlewood. My godmother, and, I believe, some relative on my mother's side into the bargain. We consider ourselves quite close relations in Ireland, when, I suppose, you cold-blooded Saxons wouldn't make out that there was any kinship at all. But she is the most charming old woman, to those she likes, *bien entendu*. I call her my fairy godmother, because she's so tiny, and so bright, and so odd, and because when I was a child she seemed always able and willing to bestow upon me whatever I took it into my head to desire, from a coral necklace to a Shetland pony."

Mr. Charlewood returned to the perusal of his blue business letter with a complacent smile on his face. It afforded him great pleasure to know that a young woman about soon to be connected by marriage with his family, had a godmother who was called "my lady."

"What does Lady Popham say, Geraldine?" asked Mrs. Dawson, a thin fair woman dressed in widow's weeds—though her husband had been dead many years—and with a somewhat stiff cold manner.

"Oh, all kinds of things, Aunt Dawson. But I must decipher the letter myself before I can tell you much about it. You know she writes the queerest little cramp hand in the world, and her spelling is unique."

"Law dear me!" exclaimed Mrs. Charlewood, with naïve astonishment, "you don't mean to say she can't spell? And she a lady of title too! 'Ow curious!"

Nobody responded to this little speech. But Penelope shot a glance at her mother across the

table, which had the effect of keeping the poor lady quiet for some time.

The conversation was carried on in groups of two and three. The Reverend Malachi Dawson and his fair betrothed sat side by side, but they were not talking with each other. Augusta was busily engaged in giving Jane Fluke an idea of her design for the bridesmaids' dresses at the approaching ceremony, and the bridegroom elect was mildly listening to Mr. Fluke's exposition of the plan of the new school-house and chapel at Duckrell: an exposition which the elder clergyman illustrated by an utterly incomprehensible arrangement of all the plates, knives, and forks within reach of his hand; clattering steel, silver, and china together with his accustomed vehemence, and twisting his napkin into a wisp with both hands, in the heat of his discourse.

Of the rest, Mrs. Charlewood and Miss Fluke were discussing the last new curate of St. Philip-in-the-Fields, Walter was relating to Mrs. Dawson some anecdote intended to impress her with an idea of the brilliant social position of his most intimate and particular friend, the Honourable Arthur Skidley, recently appointed Aide-de-camp to his Excellency the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland; and Mr. Charlewood and Miss O'Brien were absorbed in their respective letters. Clement alone sat silent and unoccupied. His chair was placed next to that of the Irish girl, and he had paid her all the due attention which such neighbourhood demanded, but now he remained quite silent, looking straight before him with an absent musing expression that had latterly become habitual with him.

Suddenly Geraldine O'Brien looked up from her letter.

"Does anybody know a Hammerham young lady of the name of Bell?" said she.

The question, although couched in this general form, was addressed more particularly to Clement, Miss O'Brien having perceived him to be the only disengaged member of the party.

"A Hammerham young lady of the name of Bell?" repeated Clement, smiling; "why, my dear Miss O'Brien, there may be fifty Hammerham young ladies of the name of Bell."

"So there may, to be sure; or five hundred. But I'm asking, do ye happen to know one particular one?"

"Bell! Bell! N—no; I think not. One of the bricklayers in my father's employ is called Bell, I think; and he has a large family of daughters. But it is scarcely likely to be one of those young ladies that you're inquiring about."

"Ah, now be aisy wid yer nonsense," said Miss O'Brien, with a comical little assumption of the brogue which it pleased her now and then to indulge in amongst intimate friends. "I'm asking you a serious question, Mr. Clement Charlewood."

"Well then, seriously, I, at all events, do not know any young lady of that name."

"Humph! It's odd too, for she is mentioned as having been a friend of the Charlewood family."

"What are you saying, Geraldine?" asked Mrs. Dawson, who had caught her niece's last words.

"Why, aunt, it's the funniest thing in the world; quite a romance. Dear fairy godmother always does get hold of the most wonderful people. See here now, I'll just read you a bit of the letter. You must know, Mr. Charlewood," said Miss O'Brien, turning to Clement, "that Lady Popham is, as she says herself, '*fanatica per la musica*.' Indeed, she is passionately fond of all kinds of art; especially the musical and dramatic; and when she was living at Naples, I believe she always had her house full of fiddlers, painters, singers, and actors. Wonderful geniuses, whom she flattered herself she was destined to reveal to the world; but who, I think, for the most part, turned out lamentable failures."

Miss Fluke here gave vent to a most extraordinary sound, that began in a groan and ended in a snort, and shook her head in a solemn and lugubrious manner.

"Oh, well, Miss Fluke," said Geraldine, quickly—for she and the clergyman's daughter had already had one or two somewhat sharp passages of arms—"I don't see anything to distress oneself about in that, after all. Lady Popham was always generous and charitable, and I'm quite sure that she did more good than harm on the whole. However, I was going to say, that my godmother writes me here six crossed pages of raptures about two young artists whom she has picked up in—Kilclare of all places in the world! Just fancy! Here's what she says:" and Miss O'Brien began to read aloud from her godmother's letter. "My young Paganini came out here to Clonccolin a fortnight ago. I sent for him to a little *soirée* I got up of a chosen few. People who have some faint glimmering of an idea about art. Most of the dear souls here haven't any glimmering. The lad played divinely. I tell you so, and tu sais bien que je m'y connais! I mean to get him to town, where he must make furore! He's such a handsome animal too. Ma come! Well, and then I made him talk to me, and tell me all about his prospects and his family. He spoke a good deal about that delicious Ophelia I've been describing to you. I can see that he admires her desperately, and, in short, I have made up a charming little romance, to end as all orthodox romances should end. Basta!"

"How like fairy godmother that is!" said Miss O'Brien, interrupting her reading for a moment.

"She's terribly impulsive," said Mrs. Dawson, icily, shutting her thin lips close. Mrs. Dawson, at all events, was not impulsive.

"Well, but now I'm coming to the point of the letter," said Miss O'Brien, "so please read on:

"Ophelia—who is perfectly poetical—comes

from the most thoroughly unpoetical spot on the face of the globe—Hammerham.”

“Law! well now, I do think her ladyship’s rather ’ard on ’ammerham,” Mrs. Charlewood ventured to observe, in a timid voice.

“‘Hammerham,’” continued Miss O’Brien; “‘and I want you, Geraldina mia, to find out all about her. She’s a most interesting creature; has a striking air of bon ton, and shines amongst her camarades de théâtre like a silver star beside the flare of tallow candles. You can easily hear of her, for Alfred Trescott, my handsome fiddler, says she was a great friend of the—oh dear me, I never remember names, but I know he mentioned those people——’” Miss O’Brien stumbled a little here, and coloured; then she proceeded in a rather hesitating manner: “‘the family of the lady that your cousin Malachi is going to marry.’”

We, who have the privilege of peeping over her shoulder, can see that Miss O’Brien omitted a phrase or two, and altered another, in her godmother’s letter, and that Lady Popham’s words really ran thus: “those rich bricks-and-mortar people that Mrs. Dawson has got hold of for your cousin Malachi.”

“Well,” said Geraldine, looking round the table, for during the last few minutes every one had been attending to her, “well, can’t anybody guess who this mysterious Miss Bell may be?”

“As true as I’m sitting ’ere,” cried Mrs. Charlewood, struck with a sudden conviction, “I do believe it must be Mabel Earnshaw under another name!”

There was a dead silence, and Geraldine O’Brien, glancing at Clement, saw that he had turned white even to the lips.

“Then it is true,” said Geraldine, addressing Mrs. Charlewood, “this young lady is a friend of your family?”

Before her mother could reply, Augusta struck in, with her most disdainful manner:

“She *was* a friend, Geraldine. That is to say, we used to receive her here, and take a good deal of notice of her at one time. But now, of course, you understand that we can have nothing more to say to her. Indeed, I may say, she got into the Manor on false pretences in some measure. For, had I known at first who and what her family and connexions were, I should never have thought of”——and Augusta leaned back in her chair with a languid haughty gesture that said as plainly as possible that she could not be at the pains of pursuing so very contemptible a subject.

“Why not? What has she done?” said Miss O’Brien, fixing her frank bright eyes upon Augusta’s face. This was too much for Miss Fluke, who had been snorting and panting and swelling with suppressed indignation for some time past, and who now burst forth with irrepressible vehemence:

“What has she done? She has disgraced herself and discredited the precious evangelical teaching that she was so highly privileged as to enjoy! She has forsaken a Christian home,

where strict piety was combined with the instruction of the first professors, to join the society of—of—rogues and vagabonds. In a word, she has chosen the path of perdition with her eyes open!” And Miss Fluke, as though to illustrate her forcible phraseology, opened her own eyes very wide indeed, and glared round upon the company.

The Reverend Malachi Dawson, to whom Miss Fluke was a quite new phenomenon, stared at her with timid astonishment depicted on his mild countenance; and when, in making the circuit of the table, her eye lighted upon him, he made an involuntary shrinking movement, like that of one who tries to avoid an expected blow.

“The carriages are at the door, ma’am,” announced a servant to Mrs. Charlewood. Every one rose immediately, and the interruption was felt to be a most welcome one, for there was a sense of uneasiness and of something vaguely disagreeable hanging over all present; an effect, indeed, which any ebullition of Miss Fluke’s eloquence was pretty sure to produce on her hearers.

“Fairy godmother’s letter seems to have burst amongst us like a bomb-shell,” said Geraldine O’Brien to Walter, as she stood putting on her gauntlets and waiting for her horse to be brought up to the door. Walter coloured and smiled uneasily. The weak vulgar vanity, which was his besetting foible, made him dread to compromise the family dignity in Miss O’Brien’s eyes by saying any word in defence of Mabel, whom he really liked, and thereby confessing a too intimate friendship with a person in a social position which he looked upon as so infinitely inferior to his own. But there was yet a spark of manliness in the lad which made him ashamed of his cowardice.

“Where’s your brother?” said Miss O’Brien, looking round for Clement as the groom led her horse up.

“Oh, please, miss,” said the man, touching his hat, “Mr. Clement’s best compliments, and would you kindly excuse him for the present? He won’t be able to go with the party, but will ride out and meet you in the evening coming home, if he can.”

Miss O’Brien put her foot into Walter’s palm, and sprang neatly into the saddle.

“The old story,” said Walter, as they rode side by side down the avenue. “Clement’s got some business or other at the last minute, that keeps him at Hammerham. The fact is, the governor’s business is on so vast a scale,” added Watty, boastfully, “and Clem is such a fellow for sticking to work and seeing to everything himself, that we look upon it as quite a wonder when he goes out even as much as he has been doing lately.”

“I don’t believe it’s business one bit,” said Geraldine O’Brien to herself, remembering Clement’s changing colour and disturbed face. “Fairy godmother, fairy godmother, I’m afraid you have innocently been doing a little mis-

chief! And yet, who knows? It may all turn out for the best, after all."

And, for some quarter of an hour, the gay-hearted buoyant Irish girl remained in a very unwon't mood of silence and contemplation.

OUT OF COLLAR.

CONSIDERING the limited and common-place sphere of action to which they are confined, there are few who experience more frequent and abrupt changes of fortune, more ups and downs in the world, than the working classes—the utility people of the great drama of life. The position of a working man is at all times an exceedingly precarious one, and is more readily and seriously influenced by circumstances beyond his own control, than the position of almost any other class of men. And, in a general way, there is nothing that so materially and frequently affects the well-being and social position of a working man, as the circumstances arising from being, in his own phrase, "out of collar," that is, his being unable to obtain work when he is able to do it, and anxious to get it to do.

Out of collar, in its least aggravated form, means distress of mind, curtailment of the ordinary comforts and necessities of life, the expenditure of the little savings that may have been laid by for sickness or old age, the getting into debt in the books of the small shopkeeper, ultimately, perhaps, the breaking up of a home, the selling of "the few sticks of furniture," and the "trapesing" across the country of the wife and family to join the bread-winner in the far-away town in which he may have again found employment. To many, it means an empty cupboard, a fireless grate, scanty clothing, a starving wife and family, sickness of body and mind, brought on by these ills at a time when they are least prepared to battle with it. To some, it means days of dull weary footsore tramping from town to town. And to all it means anxious inquiry where men are wanted, or trade is good, earnest letters or personal entreaties to friends and acquaintances to "speak for them," "put a good word in for them," or otherwise use their influence to get them work. Finally, the hanging about workshop gates, the often fruitless attempts to see "the gaffer," the dispiriting replies of "We're full-handed," "No chance," "We're discharging hands," received in answer to application for work.

Working men, as a body, may sometimes be given to grumbling without much cause; but they are by no means wont to make loud or open complaint of the inevitable distresses incidental to their position in life. Even when out of work they try to put a good face upon the matter. But while they bravely bear, they know and keenly fear and feel, the ills resulting from being out of collar. In a large workshop, when hands are being "sacked," the wistful

glances that attend the office-boy as he goes round with the notices of discharge, the anxious inquiries who has, who has not, got "the bullet," the relieved looks of those who have not got it, and the pale faces and shaking hands which belie the affected don't-careishness of some of those who have, all testify to the working man's dread of the grim consequences of being out of employment.

The loss of work does not, of course, affect all men in the same manner or degree. To a young unmarried man who has a few pounds and a suit or two of good clothes by him, and who is a member of a trade club, it may be a matter of comparatively little moment: while to the married man who has a wife and a number of children who "can neither work nor want," dependent upon him, it may be a matter of life or death. The proceedings of those who are out of work are in a great measure guided by, and dependent upon, family circumstances. In the metropolitan districts and the larger manufacturing towns of the provinces, where there are a number of establishments in the same branch of trade, there are workmen who, having been born in those districts, or settled in them early in life, never leave them, however trade may fluctuate. They may have friends or relations in the town, able to afford them some assistance in time of need; they may—and in the factory and hardware towns usually do—have children at work. They are known in the neighbourhood in which they reside. By the aid of children's wages, a little assistance from friends, and credit with the small tradesmen to whom they are known, they manage, when out of work, to keep their household together until "things take a turn," and they get into employment again. This is about as *settled* a kind of life as the great body of working men can hope to attain. To those men, however, and more especially the unmarried men, who lack the means or inclination to "hang on" in any particular district until they can get work there again, nothing remains but to go on tramp, or, as they generally put it, go on the road.

What the working man understands by this, is simply a working man travelling on foot from town to town in search of employment, and having, as a rule, the means wherewith to provide himself with a crust during the day, and a humble place in which to lay his head at night. All kinds of workmen are occasionally obliged to "take to the road," but the class who are most frequently found on tramp are the mechanics who are members of trade unions. For them, the road is deprived of half its terrors and inconveniences. The donation which, when out of employment, they receive from their union, is sufficient to relieve them from all apprehension of absolute starvation. In almost every town they have their club-house, at which they will perhaps meet some old mate, and at all times find fellow-unionists and brother-craftsmen who will receive them in good-fellowship, and furnish them with reliable information as to the state of trade and the chances of obtaining

employment in the town. But even under the most advantageous circumstances, going on the road is anything but pleasant, and is by the great body of working men regarded as a mode of looking for work only to be adopted as a last resource. I remember a mate of mine being discharged a week after he was married; the establishment in which he had been employed being the only one of its kind in the town, and trade being dull at the time, there was nothing left for him but to go on the road. He was most unwillingly making up his bundle ready for a start, when, owing to the firm receiving a large order, I was sent to tell him that he could have his job again. He was living in an upstairs room, and when I entered it, was kneeling beside a box selecting the necessary articles of clothing to take with him on his journey; but the instant I delivered my message he sprang to his feet with a whoop of triumph, and commenced the performance of an ecstatic break-down, in the midst of which a weak part of the flooring gave way, and one of his legs went through the ceiling of the room below, much to the consternation of its occupants. Nor is such extravagance, under such circumstances, by any means rare. There are many men who would regard themselves as ingrates were they not to celebrate their being "shopped," after having been out of collar, by "a spree," and I have often seen men when they have drawn their first pay after having been out of work for a considerable time, throw the money on the ground, and then lie down and roll over it: at the same time triumphantly calling the attention of their shopmates to the fact that they, though so recently "hard up," were rolling in their riches.

When it becomes necessary to go on tramp, two mates generally try to go together; sometimes, if they are both young and unmarried, and especially if they have been fellow-apprentices, they will make an arrangement to the effect, either that neither will take work in a town where the other cannot get work too, or, that if one gets work before the other, he shall keep both until his companion also "drops in." These bargains are almost always kept, not only with scrupulous honour, but in the kindest possible spirit.

The summer, as might naturally be expected, is the pleasantest season for being on the road, and it is also the cheapest, as at that time of year there is always a chance of getting a "fill" of fruit or vegetables while passing through the agricultural districts that lie between large manufacturing towns. If the weather be very hot, it is a frequent practice for men on tramp to travel by night and sleep during the hottest part of the day. Tramps have seldom an eye for the natural beauties of rural scenery, but they are not without methods of relieving the monotony of pedestrian travel. Speculations as to the probabilities of their finding employment in the town at which they are next going to call, and narrations of adventures met with on previous tramps (in the telling of which a little drawing on the imagination for the sake of effect

is in noway objected to), serve to shorten the road. Sometimes if only travelling for one day, or, in order to make sure of work, or to have a Sunday in any particular town, or when they have any other special object in view, a tramp will walk forty or fifty miles in a day; but under ordinary circumstances, twenty-five miles is considered a good average day's walk.

In tramping, as in everything else, experience maketh wise, and the experienced tramp, when on the road, suffers less in person, purse, and wardrobe, than his inexperienced brethren. The practised tramp has ingenious methods of fastening on buttons, or repairing a broken brace. He can generally do a bit of extempore tailoring, and can, at a push, wash his own shirt and stockings; and he has got rid of that fallacious notion, as erroneous as it is uncleanly, that it hardens the feet to leave them unwashed, and bathes them at least once a day whenever it is possible to do so. He is great on the subject of shoes, and knows that the best kind for tramping in are a strong pair of lace-ups that have never been cobbled, and which have been sufficiently worn to bring them to the set of the feet. When on the road, the old tramp always keeps his boots well greased, and is generally in possession of cheap and cunning recipes for the manufacture of dubbin, which shall at the same time soften the leather and render it impervious to damp. He is weather-wise, and will read the approach of a storm in signs that would altogether escape the notice of a young tramp. He has a beneficial knowledge of what may be called road-craft, and has a practical acquaintance with the "ins and outs" of many roads. On coming to the commencement of a long stretch of soft or grass-bordered road, he will, in dry weather, take off his boots, sling them across his shoulders, and walk barefoot: by this means saving his boots and easing and cooling his feet; and if, from being a long time on tramp, his feet become blistered or inflamed, he can doctor them skilfully. The old tramp, too, knows the most advantageous manner of laying out small sums of money. He will not, like the inexperienced, buy two-pennyworths of bread and cheese, or expend his coppers in the purchase of the low-priced but really dear productions of small cook-shops. He adopts the more profitable plan of buying his provisions in the rough, and by weight, and as he knows the names and prices of all the "odd bits" in the butchers' shops, he can indulge in the luxury of flesh meat much oftener than an inexperienced man, and can vary the dressing and cooking of his coarse and limited food to a surprising extent. It often happens that while waiting for an answer to an application for work, a man on the road has to remain in a town for a day or two. In this case the tramp who "knows his way about" knows what to do. In towns that are large enough to make it worth the while of men in search of work to stop in them for a day or two, on the chance of something "turning up," there is generally a free reading-room, or one to which admission can

he gained on payment of a penny. To one of these rooms the tramp, after he has performed his morning ablutions and made the most of his scanty wardrobe, betakes himself, and there he stays reading, or affecting to read, until evening, when he goes out to meet fellow-craftsmen from whom he hopes to get intelligence of a job. He only goes back to his inn at an hour when those who "use the house" are assembled. He can always relate the adventures he has met with on the road. Mostly he can sing a comic song—generally an Irish one, as by merely rolling his trousers up to the knees, and using the poker as a shillelagh, he can give it in character. In a word, he is a man of the world and "good company," and is regarded as an acquisition by the circle who meet to have their evening pipe and glass in the large well-warmed kitchen of the Hand and Hammer. For the time being he is looked upon by the tribe of the Hand and Hammer as their special guest, as a Brave of some kindred and friendly tribe. They applaud the stories of the son of the long bow and brother of the tough yarn, while he smokes the pipe of peace and drinks the glass of friendship with the admiring children of the Hand and Hammer. And should it so fall out that he becomes a dweller in those parts, and when in collar resorts to the happy drinking-ground of the Hand and Hammer, he soon becomes a brother and chief of the tribe.

If there be any romance connected with so essentially distressful a thing as being out of collar, it is the romance of the road; and tramping experiences and adventures are stock subjects of workshop conversation. Upon the day when I entered upon my apprenticeship I was much astonished and mystified by a scrap of conversation on the subject of "the road" which I overheard. In the dinner-hour I was standing beside a stove around which a number of workmen were grouped, when one of them observed, "Brassy Harry came into town last night." "Ay?" exclaimed the others. "Yes," said the first speaker, "he's been on the road five weeks, and he came forty miles yesterday." At this statement there was a general elevation of eyebrows, upon which the speaker added, in an explanatory tone: "But he got a good lift from a farmer." Now, the phrase, "of the road," was at this time indissolubly connected in my mind with visions of dashing highwaymen mounted on powerful coal-black steeds, so I was much surprised to discover, on the following day, that a pale, wayworn-looking man whom I saw standing at the workshop gate was Brassy Harry. I began to wonder how he dared show himself thus openly, and, above all, what he could possibly want at a workshop gate. "Want?" said the workman to whom I applied for enlightenment. "Why, what should he want? He wants a job." "Wants a job?" I exclaimed, in astonishment. "Yes. He's a brass-moulder, that's why we call him Brassy, and he's been out of collar, and tramping for the last five weeks, poor chap!" I now saw

the mistake under which I had been labouring, and was very glad when I heard later in the day that Brassy had got a job, and was to start on the following morning. And on the following morning he did start, as I had especial cause to remember, for on that morning, while eating the "snack" which I had brought with me by way of lunch, I threw a crust of bread under the stove. I had scarcely done so when I received from Brassy a ringing box on the ear, which almost knocked me under the stove. Before I could ask "What's that for?" Brassy, in a tone of voice that was kindly rather than otherwise, said to me: "Excuse me clouting thee, my lad, but happen it'll do thee good, for perhaps it'll teach thee never to waste a bit o' bread again. Unless thou hast better luck than most o' thy kind, the day'll come when thou'll be glad on a bit o' bread like that you've chucked away. When you're on t' road you'll think turnips good eating, and look on bread as Sunday grub." After this little incident we became the best of friends, and many a cunning "wrinkle" did he put me up to in the way of my trade, and many an interesting tale of life on the road did he tell me during the three years we were shopmates.

It has twice fallen to my lot to go on the road. The first occasion was just after I was "out of my time." It was in the month of November. I had just become lord of myself, and was determined to show—by refusing to listen to the advice of disinterested friends, who were older, wiser, and more experienced than myself—that I was a man. Go on the road I would, and go on the road I did, and most sincerely I repented of that same going before many days were over my unhappy head. With a bundle containing a change of clothes under my arm, and in company with a mate who, like myself, was going on the road for the first time, I set out at seven o'clock one clear frosty morning. We had taken a good warm breakfast before starting, and were well under way by daylight. The coldness of the weather necessitating a good pace, we reached the town at which we intended to stay for the night—and which was twenty-eight miles distant—early in the afternoon. After a tea-dinner we rested for an hour, and then went out to a place at which we knew the men of our trade were wont to congregate, in order to get "the tips" as to the probabilities of getting work in that town. We were received by our fellow-craftsmen in all brotherly kindness, but the intelligence they had to give us was not very encouraging, being to the effect that trade was dull, and many men were out of work. There was nothing for us but to continue our journey; and at an early hour next morning we were again on the road. At starting, we felt rather sick and footsore, but we got better as we warmed to our work, and, after the first five miles, got along at a tolerably good rate, though not so quickly as on the day before. Our conversation was also less cheerful and more forced than it had been on the first day, and the night was rapidly

closing in when we had done the thirty miles to the town in which we were going to sleep. We were too tired to go out that night, and after a wash and a feed, went to bed. In the morning we were astir in time to meet the workmen coming to their breakfasts, and, having ascertained from some of them that trade was tolerably good in the town, we determined to try for work there. Accordingly we called at a number of shops, and at one of them my companion (who belonged to a different branch of the trade from mine) got employed; but I was less fortunate, as every shop was full-handed in my particular line. My companion—though there had been no agreement to that effect—offered to share his wages with me if I liked to stay in the town for a week or two. This liberal offer, however, I declined, and on the following morning I started on my travels alone. Then, for the first time, I began fully to experience the real miseries of being on tramp. I was very footsore; for, though I had not been on the road the day before, I had been walking about the streets of a busy town and waiting about workshop gates all day. Now that I had no one to speak to, each mile seemed as long as two had previously done. I had only got about seven miles on my way when it began to rain heavily, and continued to do so until my clothes were thoroughly saturated. A cold wind rising as soon as the rain ceased, my wet clothes were made to cling round me in a horribly chilling manner. It was dark, when, utterly weary and beginning to feel uncomfortably feverish, I reached the town which I had marked out as my resting-place for the night. Having made the best of my way to the public-house to which I had been recommended by one who had “done” the line of road, I ordered a supper, which I found I could not eat, and went to bed. To bed, but not to sleep; the feverish feeling increasing during the night to an extent that kept me tossing and tumbling from side to side until daylight began to dawn, and then I got up, weary and unrefreshed. Still I was determined to push on, and I once more set out. The morning was tolerably fine, and the fresh air revived me considerably; my feet felt less painful than they had felt on the previous day, and, becoming a little more cheerful on making these discoveries, I resolved that I would that day “do” the larger half of the sixty-five miles that still lay between me and London, in which city I had made up my mind to wait for work, if I met with none before reaching it. I was disagreeably startled by the commencement of a heavy pour of rain, which lasted for several hours, and by which my clothes were wetted through and through before I could reach any adequate shelter. With the chilling of my body my fever returned, so at length, about noon, at which time the rain was still coming down in torrents, I recklessly sat down on a large stone by the roadside, with a vague intention of writing my name and address on a piece of paper,

fastening it to my jacket, and there and then giving up the ghost. While searching my pockets for a piece of pencil, with which to carry out the first part of this plan, I fell to reflecting upon my position, and by some curious process of reasoning the method of which (if it ever had any) I do not now recollect, I fully persuaded myself that society in general, and not my own wrong-headedness, was responsible for the sad case in which I found myself. Strange as it may seem, this idea afforded me consolation, as did also the repetition to myself of some lines that had been composed under circumstances similar to those in which I then was, by a former shopmate, and which ran thus:

Out in the rain, the pitiless rain,
Suffering from hunger, cold, and pain,
The weary tramp pursues his way,
He has travelled many miles to-day,
And many he must travel yet,
Though his heart is heavy and garments wet.

By the time I had repeated this doggerel two or three times, and fished out the piece of pencil from the contents of my pockets, a considerable modification had taken place in my views respecting life and death. If I were to die, it occurred to me that I might as well die in harness, while if I were not to die—and I began to suspect that I was by no means so near death as I had a few minutes before supposed—I was only losing time by sitting on a damp stone grumbling. So, taking heart of grace, I rose to my feet again, and walked on till about six o'clock in the evening, when I reached a town in which there was a club-house belonging to my trade. Finding that I could have a bed in that house, I took up my quarters there for the night. After drinking a cup of tea, I leaned my aching head against the back of the screen, and fell into a restless snatchy kind of sleep, from which I was aroused by feeling a cool soft hand laid on my forehead. On looking up, I found that the hand was that of the buxom widow who was the landlady of the house. She was fat, fair, and forty, and had a countenance so comely and so beaming with good nature, that it was a positive pleasure to look upon it. As I gazed into her kind matronly face, and met her pitying glance, I felt fairly broken down. My troubles had before only tended to make me sullen, and to cause me to bring unfounded charges against society, but the landlady's touch of nature melted me in an instant, and, but that there were two or three customers looking on, I believe I should have laid my head on her expansive bosom, and had what the ladies call “a good cry.” “Poor boy,” she said, when she saw that I was awake, “you're very bad; but don't be cast down, we'll soon put you to rights again; come with me, and I'll give you something that will do you good.”

I followed her into her own cozy little parlour, where a warm bath for my feet, and a basin of strongly dashed gruel, were speedily got ready,

the servant in the mean time being instructed to take the sheets from the bed in which I was to sleep, and put additional blankets on it. I got to bed with all convenient haste, and had not been long between the blankets, when the landlady's remedies began to have the desired effect. A profuse perspiration, which in all probability saved me from a violent fever, broke out all over me and lasted for several hours. About midnight I fell into a sound sleep, from which I only awoke at eleven o'clock next day, and then I felt quite restored.

I stayed in the inn all that day, and when going to bed at night intimated to the landlady that I would settle with her then, for I wished to be on the road at an early hour the following morning, as it was my intention to walk to London without further stoppages. "You had better go by train," she said, when I had told her my intentions, "and not run the risk of knocking yourself up again." In order that I might not seem to be disregarding her advice from obstinacy, I hinted that after paying her I feared I would not be able to afford going by train. Upon hearing this, she not only insisted upon my letting her bill stand over until I should get into collar, but even offered to lend me money to pay my fare to London. "I couldn't afford to lose the money," she said, "and I wouldn't lend it to every one, but you seem to be a decent, well-spoken lad, and you're fresh from home, and I've lads of my own who'll soon have to go out in the world, and for their sake I wouldn't see any tidy young fellow in difficulties for the sake of a few shillings, if I could help him. Besides," she concluded, with a smile, "I don't think that you would wrong any one who trusted you." I fervently assured her, though not exactly in the language of the poet, that even if I *had* a heart for falsehood framed, I ne'er could injure her. I started for London by the first train on the following morning, and soon got work in the great city. In a few weeks I settled the bill of the warm-hearted landlady, accompanying the money with a present of a "dress-piece," as a token that I had not forgotten the motherly kindness I had received at her hands. This present she accepted in the spirit in which it was given, though I subsequently ascertained that, owing to my taste in colours being of a decidedly florid order, she was unable to make any use of it. She observed, when afterwards speaking to me on the subject, that it was a little too flaming for a woman of her years and figure.

My second tramp, though it lasted for five weeks, was much pleasanter than my first, chiefly owing to the circumstances that it took place during the summer, and that I had for a travelling companion a tramp so experienced that tramping might with him be almost said to be a profession. He was a perfect master of road-craft, and having before been over many of the roads along which we passed, was often acquainted with short cuts that saved several miles in the course of a day's march. He had a prac-

tical, if not a scientific, knowledge of physiognomy, never mistaking his man in asking for a "lift." To him, the outsides of houses presented indications of the dispositions of their inhabitants, and he would unhesitatingly "spot" the farm-houses at which by asking for a drink of water you would be sure to get a drink of beer or milk. He carried a small kit of tools with him, and was noted for his skill in repairing beer engines and other machinery pertaining to the public-house business. In company with such a guide, philosopher, and friend, as this, life on the road was comparatively pleasant, and when, after tramping through a great part of Yorkshire and Lancashire, we at last got into collar again in one of the large towns of the latter county, it was with a feeling of regret that I once more "buckled to" at the little-varying routine of workshop life.

When a working man on tramp arrives in any town in which men with whom he has formerly "worked mates" are employed, his old shopmates vie with each other who shall be kindest to him. When, by their invitation, he goes to meet them coming from their work, there is a friendly rivalry as to which of them shall take him home to share their meal, and when at night they take him out with them, they display the utmost delicacy in seeing that he is allowed to bear no part of any expenses that may be incurred. If any of them have influence in the establishment in which they are employed, they exert it to the utmost in trying to get work for their old mate, and if he do not obtain employment in the town, if he be very hard up, they will make a subscription among themselves, and sometimes among their fellow-workmen, to help him on the road. In such towns as Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool, and more especially in the London district, a workman on tramp will, if he is tolerably well known in the trade, and if he have, when in collar, shown a disposition to assist those who were out, often be kept among his former shopmates, or by those whom in his day he has assisted, until such time as he gets work in the district. Trade must be very dull indeed if in the large towns a man who has friends in the trade, on the look-out for work for him, does not get into employment in the course of a few weeks. When a man who has been a considerable length of time on the road, gets into work again, the kindness and consideration of his fellow-workmen still attend him and do him good service. They will lend him their best tools, and "pitch in" to their own work in order to be able to lend him a hand with his, until he has recovered from the effects of his tramp, and got into the ways of the shop. Any one who attempted to "horse" a man fresh from the road, would be scouted by his fellow-craftsmen.* But for

* To horse a man, is for one of two men who are engaged on precisely similar pieces of work to make extraordinary exertions in order to work down the other man. This is sometimes done simply to see what kind of a workman a new man may be, but often with the much less creditable motive of injur-

such friendly consideration as this, those who have got employment after being on tramp would often be unable to retain it, as life on the road knocks up all men more or less, and for days, and sometimes weeks, renders them incapable of working on equal terms with men who have been living regularly.

Owing to the overstocked state of the labour market there are always some men out of collar, and from the constantly recurring fluctuations of trade there are often thousands of men out of employment at one time. In discussing any question relative to the social position or prospects of the working classes, the out of collar phase of their life, and the impoverishing consequences resulting from it, should be taken into consideration. It should be remembered that it takes the working man who has a family dependent upon him, months, sometimes years, to get over the disastrous effects of "a spell out of collar."

GOLDEN WAVERLEY.

THE Waverley of which I write is not the novel of that name, but a little ugly unpicturesque town, entirely built of wood, and placed amid a wilderness of the barest and most unpromising looking rock that mortal foot ever trod or eye beheld. Yet Waverley is a very interesting place, or I should not run the risk of being voted a bore for describing a visit which I paid to it, in the early autumn of the year 1865. How I happened to hear of it, and to go to it, was in this wise: travelling by rail from the poor little town of Windsor, in Nova Scotia, to the thriving and hospitable city of Halifax, my attention was directed, when about midway between the two points, to the very bleak barren stony country through which the train was creeping, at the rate of about sixteen miles an hour. I noticed, in the heart of this wilderness, a large collection of wooden shanties freshly built, and asked the only conversable person in the car—an American—what the place was. "Don't know," said he; "but it looks a God-forsaken country altogether." I asked the guard; and he said the station was called German-town, and that it was chiefly inhabited by Germans, employed by a German company, engaged in gold mining. Further information he could not give me. Next morning, in Halifax, I chanced to read in the Morning Chronicle (*clarum et venerabile nomen!* that has passed away from London journalism, which it once adorned, and only survives in Halifax, in Quebec, and one or two other colonial cities) that a bar of gold, weighing two hundred and eighty-four ounces, the product of the labour of twelve men during six weeks, in the gold mines of

Sherbrooke, had been recently exhibited in the city; and that a "brick" of gold, weighing eight hundred ounces, being one month's result of the operations of the German company at Waverley, was at that moment on view at the Government Office of Mines in the Parliament House. Having nothing particular to do, I went to look at it, and learned that German-town, which I had passed the day before, was but the newest name given to Waverley; and that the true designation of the district where these mining operations were carried on, was the Waverley gold region. The official inspector of mines, seeing that I took an interest in the subject, courteously offered to drive me to Waverley on the following day. "Waverley itself," he said, "has no attractions; for it looks more like Arabia Petræ than any other part of God's earth; but the road for the first sixteen or eighteen miles is lovely, and the country is in all its autumnal beauty. You can see the whole operations of gold mining, from beginning to end, in a couple of hours, and can have the rest of the day for such exploration of forest scenery as we may be tempted to make, either in going or returning." The offer was gratefully accepted.

The original intention was to confine our party to our two selves; but fate and a lady, or rather two ladies—to whom was afterwards added a small and much-cherished lady a long way on the sunny side of her teens—willed otherwise. We were to have gone in a gig with one gallant steed, but had to provide a roomy open carriage, and two gallant steeds, in consequence of this pleasant extension of our company, and to lay in a little more champagne and other creature-comforts than we had originally intended. The morning was beautifully fine and clear—neither hot nor cold—a morning that would have suited for a long walk, even more admirably than for a drive—when we started from the door of the Halifax hotel and bowed cheerily along to the ferry-boat that was to convey us across the harbour to the little town of Dartmouth, on the opposite side. Halifax is not a beautiful city to look at from within, but seen from the water it is highly picturesque. It is, moreover, a very agreeable city to live in, as every British officer of the army or the navy, who has ever been stationed there, will readily confess, if he appreciate kindly and generous hospitality. Whether this Halifax or its namesake in Yorkshire, be the scene of the romance that attaches to the history of "Unfortunate Miss Bailey," I found no one in Nova Scotia who could tell me, nor did the doleful ditty, in which her woes are recorded, seem to be known to anybody. Halifax is chiefly built of wood, and contains only two streets of stone or brick. These two would, probably, have remained as wooden as the rest, if it had not been for a beneficent conflagration that broke out a few years ago and levelled them with the ground. The whole city very narrowly escaping a similar fate.

As we crossed the ferry I was reminded, as every stranger is certain to be, that the harbour

ing a fellow-workman in the estimation of an employer; with the exception, perhaps, of a skulking fellow who tries to avoid doing his fair share of a joint job, there is no man more despised of working men than the one who tries to horse another for a selfish or spiteful purpose.

of Halifax is one of the safest and most commodious in the world, and large enough to contain the united navies of all the Christian powers in the two hemispheres. Landing at Dartmouth, we travelled pleasantly along an excellent road: once, and before the construction of the railway to Windsor and Truro, the post-road to the last-mentioned town. Our route skirted the eastern shores of three lakes, respectively four, five, and seven miles in length, and from one to three in breadth, named William, Thomas, and Charles, in honour of the three sons of some illustrious obscure among the early settlers of Acadia, but whose surname, if it survive in tradition, has escaped the record of history, and is heard no more in the haunts which he was the first to explore. We passed several encampments of the Micmac Indians on the way, and were pursued for long distances by the juvenile population, male and female, of the tribe, earnestly clamouring for the "pennies," which it is the custom of travellers to throw from their vehicles to induce a scramble, such as may be seen among the beggars of Ireland or Italy. Having paid our tribute, as the cheapest mode of disembarassing ourselves of such pertinacious runners as these semi-savages, who seemed to be quite able to keep up with our horses for a dozen miles without distressing themselves, we reached Waverley in about two hours and a half. The weather was magnificent, and overhead was a transparent, deep blue sky, such as is only to be seen in America, or, perhaps, on the African shores of the Mediterranean, and of the beauty of which no Englishman who has not crossed the Atlantic can form an adequate conception. On one side of us stretched the "primeval forest" of hemlock, spruce, and pine, intermingled with the maple and the beech, from the thickest recesses of which a spiral column of blue smoke curling above the tree-tops, every now and then, betrayed the existence of an Indian wigwam. On the other side lay the lovely and lonely lakes, not like Ontario, Erie, or Michigan—too large for admiration or survey—but bijou pictures, reflecting in their tranquil bosoms, scarcely ruffled by the breeze, the beautiful panorama of hill and forest on their furthest banks; a woodland tinted by all the gorgeous colours that autumn in these latitudes scatters amid the forest trees in bountiful profusion, in which bright crimson, vivid scarlet, and golden yellow predominate, and in which green of every shade, from the pale hue of the earliest vegetation of the year to the deep colour of the yew and cypress, mingle with brown and amber, till the whole forest glows in as much variegation of tint as a flower-garden in June. The first of the three lakes, and one of the loveliest of the chain, is scarcely half an hour's drive from Halifax, and the second not above an hour's; and yet no villas or country houses have been built on the shores of either by the millionaires of the city. Fashion does not run in that direction; but if Halifax should become a commercial emporium of the Confederate States of British

America, as the friends and supporters of Colonial Union anticipate, it is possible that in a quarter of a century these fair sheets of water will not offer to the gaze of the traveller the picture of primitive wildness which they now present, and that their banks will be enriched with the handiwork of the architect and the landscape gardener, and enlivened with all the appliances with which wealth and refinement love to adorn their rural homes. At present, however, the rich men of Halifax seem to prefer the dingy wooden houses of their forefathers, and where they themselves were born, contented with the substance of wealth, without thinking it necessary to flaunt its shadow in the eyes of spectators.

Towards the extremity of the third lake, the scenery grows more rugged. The bald bare hills raise their stony heads to an altitude of seven hundred or eight hundred feet, and the vegetation at their base becomes scantier. Every hill-top and rocky eminence, as the town of Waverley comes into sight, is crowned with a wooden shanty: either the dwelling-place of a miner or the entrance of a shaft. Stretching over the crown of the landscape, these shanties extend from east to west, the direction of the vein of gold-bearing quartz, the existence of which has vivified the wilderness. There is stone enough lying about—blasted by the miners in the search for gold, or strewn by the hand of Nature—to build a city as large as London or Paris; but every shanty, house, or tenement, in the place is of wood—wood of the newest and freshest, unpainted and unadorned—and proving incontestably that the village is but of yesterday's growth, and has been called into existence for a temporary purpose. Were Waverley, with its two thousand inhabitants, in the United States, and not in a colony of Great Britain, it would doubtless possess by this time two or three daily newspapers, living no one knew how; as many weeklies, all at variance with each other, on political, religious, or literary questions, and vivacious with all the petty personalities of a small community; as well as a monster hotel, in which the whole population could be accommodated; half a dozen chapels and little Bethels, a synagogue, a school-house, a fire-engine establishment, and at least two rival banks. But not being civilised up to the American point, it makes three small but comfortable wayside inns do the work of the monster hotel (and do it much better), and contents itself with one church, one chapel, and one school-house. The bank is at Halifax, the newspapers are non-existent, and, probably, non-projected; and the wooden shanties stand so far apart that a fire in one of them would not extend to its neighbour, consequently that great element in the social life of the Americans—the Volunteer Fire Company—is little needed.

Alighting at the Waverley Arms to refresh ourselves, preparatory to an examination of the mines, we were agreeably surprised to find that if we had been contented with bad whisky or pure water to drink, and with

excellent fish, flesh, or fowl to eat, we need not have provided ourselves with provender of any kind from Halifax. As if to prove the plenty within, there stood at the door a group of half a dozen sportsmen, all miners or other labourers, who had been out in the woods to kill game, and who had returned, each with a goodly display of partridges—one man with as many as a dozen brace. There are no game-laws in Nova Scotia, except one continually set at nought, prohibiting the killing of certain birds at a certain period. Game at present is abundant, though it is impossible to say how long it will remain so in a land where every one is allowed to "sport" when and where he pleases. On referring to the market price of partridges at Halifax on this particular day, I found it was twenty-five cents, or one shilling sterling, per brace, from which it might have been inferred, and doubtless with justice, that the price in the woods was considerably inferior, if they were to be sold at all in a region where every little boy or idle man in possession of a gun could go and shoot for himself.

Having ordered our dinner, we started for the mines, and speedily came upon Waverley Cottage, which gives its name to the town, and which, less than six years ago, stood alone in the wilderness. A Mr. Allan, a Scotchman, a manufacturer of pails and buckets, and a great admirer of the genius of his illustrious countryman, Sir Walter Scott, had bestowed the name of the famous novel on his little establishment, partly because it was a pretty name, partly to keep up the remembrances and traditions of the "old country," which a Scotchman, however remote he may be from it, never ceases to love, with a love that absence only makes the fonder. Mr. Allan, good easy man, little thought of the golden treasure amid the rocks that on every side, except that towards the lake, lifted their bare pates to the blue sky. But the first gold of Nova Scotia was not found here. In the summer of 1861, alluvial gold was discovered at a place called Tangier, in the county of Halifax, and, in digging some improved sewers in the city of Halifax, the workmen came upon unmistakable evidence of a vein of gold-bearing quartz. Prospecting for gold, which had been for some time carried on with indifferent success, received a new impetus from these discoveries, and within a circuit of many miles, commencing a few hundred yards from Mr. Allan's cottage, the precious metal was found embedded in the surface quartz in such quantities as to justify the hope that by deep digging a large amount of treasure might reward the labourer's toil. Nor was the hope fallacious. Waverley Cottage in less than a year after this time, found itself the most prominent building in a town called after itself; and bucket-making ceased to be the staple and only business of the place.

Our way to the mines was tedious, and we had ultimately to alight, leave our carriage and horses in the shadiest place we could find, and toil up the stony ascent to the

office of the superintendent. This gentleman, a German, and the employer of some hundreds of his fellow-countrymen, was prepared for our coming, did the honours of the mines with the greatest courtesy, and explained all the not very intricate operations that are necessary to extract the quartz from the earth, crush it by steam or water power, and collect the residuum of gold. In this region it does not pay the individual miner to try his fortune on his own account, as it does in California and Australia. The lode, which is about three feet in width, and of unknown depth as well as length, runs under the hard quartzite rock at a minimum distance of eighty or a hundred feet from the surface; and considerable capital is required to purchase the machinery and to hire the labour necessary to work it to advantage. For a royalty of three per cent on the produce of the mines, to be paid to the government of Nova Scotia, what is called a "mining area," may on certain well-defined, and by no means onerous, terms, be obtained by any responsible person; these areas, sometimes taken up in the first flush of the gold excitement by people who knew nothing of the business, have since passed into the hands of associations formed for the purpose of working them scientifically. Foremost and most successful of these is the German Company, which work the Waverley mines, and which, without the aid of puffery or stock-jobbery, but by solid attention to the business in all its details, have made the Waverley mines the most productive of all the mines of Nova Scotia, though the quartz is by no means the richest to be found in the colony, averaging less than one ounce of gold per ton of quartz: while at the Oldham mines quartz has been discovered, one lot having yielded at the rate of one hundred and three ounces per ton. "Every month," according to the then last official report to the government, "gold mining is becoming less a series of spasmodic operations and more a steady business, into which men enter without any extraordinary excitement, and which they prosecute with the steady energy and the rational expectations they might be supposed to carry into any other business. The great advantage, too, of working the mines on a more extended scale than formerly has become pretty generally recognised. Formerly operations were, for the most part, carried on by individuals, or small associations, of very moderate means, occupying each but a small mining tract, and usually limiting their works to a single shaft. Every auriferous quartz lode is found to vary in richness, both in a vertical and a horizontal direction. Nothing was more common than for the single-shaft miner to get discouraged when he reached a comparatively poor section of what was really a rich lode as a whole, and to abandon his mine altogether, at the same time imparting his discouragement to many others in his vicinity. Many quartz lodes have thus been condemned as too poor to be profitably worked, which would prove highly remunerative

if skilfully mined on a large scale; and it would appear that this fact is becoming every day more widely recognised among those engaged in mining enterprises."

The Waverley district is but one of nine that are worked with more or less success in Nova Scotia. In the months of July, August, and September, prior to our visit, the total yield of gold for the districts of Stormont, Wine Harbour, Sherbrooke, Tangier, Montagu, Waverley, Oldham, Renfrew, and other unproclaimed districts, was six thousand four hundred and sixty-eight ounces six pennyweights, representing a value of upwards of twenty-five thousand pounds sterling. In the previous quarter, from March to July, the yield was seven thousand eight hundred and thirty-eight ounces; but as the summer of 1865 had been unusually dry, the operations at nearly all the mines were either greatly impeded or wholly suspended by want of water to supply the crushing mills. The total yield for the financial year ending on the 30th of September was twenty-four thousand nine hundred and seven ounces five pennyweights twenty-two grains, of the value, as the gold is exceedingly pure, of four pounds per ounce, or ninety-nine thousand six hundred and twenty-eight pounds. The largest number of men employed in any of the mines is by the German Company at Waverley. Their wages are one dollar per diem, or five thousand two hundred dollars per working month of twenty-six days. In the month of July the company produced one thousand three hundred and sixty-eight ounces of gold, which, at four pounds per ounce, would amount to five thousand four hundred and seventy-two pounds, or twenty-eight thousand three hundred and sixty dollars, leaving a balance of twenty-one thousand five hundred and twenty dollars for wear and tear of machinery, incidental expenses, and net profit. As the maximum yield per ton at these mines for this particular month was only two ounces seven pennyweights twenty grains, it can easily be seen how vast an amount of labour was performed, and how profitable Nova Scotia mining now is, and promises to be hereafter, when the resources of the country are still further developed, and when many hopeful enterprises that now languish for want of labour are prosecuted with proper vigour. "The increase," said our guide, "has been marked and satisfactory since gold mining was originally commenced in 1862. In that year the yield of all the mines was seven thousand eleven hundred and ten ounces; in 1863 it was fourteen thousand and one ounces, or nearly double; in 1864, when, by a change made in the fiscal year, the accounts were only brought up to September 30, or nine months, the yield was fourteen thousand five hundred and sixty-five ounces; and from September 30, 1864, to September 30, 1865, it was twenty-four thousand seven hundred and twenty-seven ounces." Our guide considered, from a variety of indications, that gold mining in Nova Scotia was only in its infancy, and that the great impediment in the way of its

more successful prosecution was the scarcity of labour. No prizes were offered to the mere speculator; the digger, as in California and Australia, does not and cannot stand on his own basis, and has no expectations of being rewarded in one forenoon with a nugget that might be the recompense of years of labour, as has sometimes happened in the richer auriferous lands. All has to be done on plan and on system, with the nicest adaptation of means to ends, and with the greatest amount of skill and science as well as of economy. Consequently, the gold mines of Nova Scotia attract no crowds, and their exploitation is left to people who thoroughly understand what they are about—who do not expect to grow rich at a bound—and who are content to make large profits without boasting too loudly to the outer world, either of their deeds or their expectations.

As there is nobody on earth, if we did but know all about everybody on earth, who would not be found to have a pet grievance, so these prosperous and thrifty gold miners of Nova Scotia have theirs. It is not a very large one, it must be confessed. It appears that all the gold of Nova Scotia is shipped for Europe by the Cunard steamers from Boston to Liverpool, which put in every fortnight to Halifax, and that, either by oversight or by strict adherence to established routine, this gold is entered as the product of the first port of departure, and that, consequently, New England rather than Nova Scotia has credit in the markets of Europe for this much precious metal. This grievance—if grievance it be—the Messrs. Cunard, if their attention be thus directed to it, may easily remedy. The stroke of the pen of one of their clerks may do it, and these jealous colonists—jealous only of the Americans—may be pacified and satisfied.

THE CABMAN'S GUIDE.

LET it be known that the four-wheelers have an organ, the Hansoms a medium of communication between themselves and the public, the omnibus-men a literary champion to defend their rights. A periodical journal called *The Whip* takes up these functions, and accepts its duties with as much gravity as any other penny newspaper. Cabmen's wrongs and omnibus grievances, conferences between cab-owners and cab-drivers, public meetings of whippers to protest against wrongful legislation, condemnations of magisterial decisions, sarcasms about "Mayne force"—all are brought into prominence. And it is a fact, which we may hope the legislature will take to heart, that the proprietors presented gratuitous copies of *Number Two* to all the members of both Houses of Parliament, in order that the noble and honourable senators might know all about a certain great meeting, which was held at a certain public-house in Lambeth, on a certain evening.

The truth is, that Jehu, Jarvey, cabby, or call him what we may, is suffering from too much

legislation. Nobody will let him alone. While free trade is admissible and admitted in almost all other occupations, cab-driving is hampered on all sides with restrictions. It has been so from the beginning of the system. Two centuries and a half ago, a few hackney-coaches began to ply for hire at the inn yards in the metropolis; a few years afterwards, they were limited in number, and restricted by special laws, partly at the instigation of the sedan-owners, and they have never since been really free. Their number, however, gradually increased; two centuries ago, there were five hundred of them in London; about the beginning of Queen Anne's reign, there were eight hundred; and still they gradually increased. But Jarvey became an impudent surly fellow, much disposed to fleece his clients, and very indifferent about the fragility, dirt, discomfort, or frouzy smell, of his vehicle. At last, something more than forty years ago, a smart affair called a cabriolet made its appearance, much to the wrath of Jarvey. With great difficulty, owing to the talk about vested interests, licenses were obtained for eight of these cabriolets, to be worked at two-thirds of hackney-coach fares. These cabriolets, or cabs, as at first introduced, were hooded chaises, drawn by one horse, and carrying only one passenger besides the driver, who sat on the same seat with his fare. Then, to make the matter a little more select, and to accommodate two passengers instead of one, a small separate seat for the driver was made at the right-hand side of the cab. Some time afterwards, was introduced an odd-looking affair like a slice from an omnibus, with seats on which two passengers sat face to face, and a door at the back. Then, after a few more changes, came the most useful member of the family: the four-wheeler; with two seats for two persons each, two doors, and a regular driver's seat in front; and, most dashing of all, the Hansom, with its large wheels, open front, driver perched behind, high-stepping horse, and pace that placed slow-going folks in some peril.

Meanwhile, the legislature busied itself mightily in the matter, petting and pottering and bothering Jarvey and cabby in various ways. At one time, there were twelve hundred hackney-coaches licensed, against a strictly defined number of sixty-five cabs. But at last the limitation of number was abandoned, and every and any happy man might become the owner or the driver of a coach or a cab, on complying with certain regulations. Twenty years ago, the cabs had become ten times as numerous as the hackney-coaches, their cheaper hire having placed them in greater favour with the public, and their more profitable working having attracted the attention of owners towards them. The registrar of hackney-carriage licenses can name the year when hackney-coaches came down to a solitary one; whether that solitary one is still living, we do not know.

Thirty-five years ago, when legislators could only spare a little time from the great Reform Bill to attend to other matters, they

managed to regulate the hacks and cabs, laying down rules about single fare and back fare, day fare and night fare, in-distance fare and out-distance fare, shilling-a-mile fare and shilling a half-hour fare for coaches, eightpence a mile fare and eightpence a half-hour fare for cabs, licenses and badges for vehicles and drivers, restrictions about standing in the streets, compulsion of service when claimed by a hirer, and so forth. Eleven years afterwards, there was another Act passed, bristling with clauses about lost property, furious driving, intoxication, insulting language, loitering, licenses, payment of duties, summonses, punishments, penalties, and a number of other tremendous things. After another ten years, the noble lords and honourable members seemed to think that they had not legislated enough; so they began again. Owner and driver to be licensed, cab to be inspected, certificates to be applied for, duties and fees to be paid, police commissioners to be all in all, fares to be reduced to sixpence a mile, back fares disallowed, driver to have a table of fares and a book of fares, no charge for a moderate amount of luggage, driver accountable for property left in the vehicle, lamp to the vehicle at night, owner *must* ply his cab, and driver *must* accept a fare, and a great deal else of minute legislation.

Those who were in London, either as residents or as visitors, fourteen years ago, will remember the twenty-seventh of July, the day of the cab strike. The Bill above adverted to had just passed, and the cabman was furious at the forced reduction from eightpence to sixpence per mile, coupled with restrictions in other ways. Let the Annual Register tell us what was done, and how it ended. "At twelve o'clock on the night of Tuesday every cab went home, and the members of parliament (the authors of their wrongs), on leaving their legislative duties, had to walk home. On the following morning not a cab was to be seen in the streets. Great was the surprise and consternation. Hundreds who left their houses at an early hour with well-filled carpet-bags, or who waited at their doors with their families and baggage, ready to travel by railway, found no means of conveyance. Lawyers and men of business, tied to fixed hours, found no means of travel but those with which nature had provided them. Later in the morning the trains arrived, filled with thousands of passengers, with their luggage; but means of leaving the stations there were none. Great was the vexation, and many the substitutes improvised. The omnibuses continued to run, and thus provided for many; but carts, hucksters' vans, barrows, and porters were eagerly seized upon at fabulous prices. The great majority of passengers walked, and followed their baggage, amid the jeers of the cabmen, who lined the pavement. So unexpected was the stagnation, that not the slightest preparation had been made to remedy the inconvenience; but as the day passed on, forgotten flies were dusted, and came forth to the light of

day; glass coaches earned a great harvest. The railway companies also devised a plan of great convenience to their passengers. The luggage was piled in districts, placed on their large vans, and delivered in circuits; they also telegraphed to the chief places on the lines, and in a few hours preparations were made for bringing up some hundreds of flies, bath coaches, cars, and other vehicles, from Dover, Bath, Bristol, Cheltenham, Birmingham, and Liverpool. This very annoying trick, when the first burst of indignation was over, seemed to be considered on both sides as a good joke, and was borne with much good humour. Occasionally a few drunken cabmen annoyed a non-juring brother, and the magistrates had some additional business. The strike continued three days, during which the streets presented an unusual aspect of quiet and good order. But, by that time, numerous unlicensed vehicles—an irregularity which the authorities refused to notice—supplied the public necessities; the public discovered that they could walk or stay at home without much inconvenience; and the cab-owners found that they were losing two thousand pounds a day, with no definite object in view. The recusants, therefore, reappeared, and all went on as before."

Now, is there any real necessity for all this microscopic legislation? Is there a good reason to assign why cabs and such-like vehicles should be treated in this exceptional way? The law does not attempt to decide whether ten or twelve shillings is a proper price for a hat, forty pounds or fifty pounds a proper rent for a house, fourteen pounds or sixteen pounds the proper wages for our servant, Mary Jane, threepence or fourpence the proper price for the Times, a halfpenny or a penny the proper price for a hot-cross bun, one-a-penny or two-a-penny for dumping apples, threehalf-pence or twopence for a pint of beer. Nay, even in omnibus travelling the proprietors and the public are left at liberty to make their bargains; and it may safely be asserted, despite many complaints against the vehicles themselves, that the public are not the worse off for this liberty. No law could fix an omnibus fare so low as threepence from the Marble Arch to the City, or from Haverstock-hill to Westminster Abbey; yet that is what we now practically obtain.

The Society of Arts took up this subject a few months ago, with a view to an interchange of opinions concerning it. Mr. Henry Cole expressed a belief that it is a mistake to legislate on a sixpence per mile basis. Numbers of needy men set up single cabs, purchasing or hiring old worn-out vehicles; as a consequence of which the cabs of London are about the shabbiest in Europe. Let every cab-owner, it has been urged, decide fares for himself; and then those who plan the best will gradually obtain the largest amount of public support. Birmingham, Liverpool, and Edinburgh are admitted to possess better cabs than the metropolis. At Paris, there was an alteration made

last year, confirming, it is true, the central government control over all the vehicles, and laying down the tariff of fares; but opening a door for improvements which do not appear to have reached London. There are three kinds of French cabs or voitures, varying in charge according to their excellence of appointments—from one to two francs per *course*, or from one and a quarter to two and a half francs per hour; one kind, the "Victoria," an open four-wheeler, is said to be much in favour with ladies. At one time there was a hope entertained that the London cab system would be improved by the use of indexes or tell-tales, calculated to show correctly the distance run, and it may yet be that something of the kind will come into use; but cab-drivers have hitherto been too discontented a body of men to give fair play to any such check upon their charges. It is pretty well recognised that capitalists do not care to embark in the cab line; it does not pay sufficiently well to cover all risks. The owners complain that they have not been participants in the benefit which the omnibus proprietors realised by a change in the duty last year, bringing down the yearly duty on a 'bus from sixty-six pounds to about sixteen. The 'bus, requiring about ten horses to work it, now pays little more duty than the cab, which never requires more than two horses a day. Mr. Frederick Hill, in the discussion above adverted to, expressed an opinion that the low fare and the high duty, acting together, reduce the cab-driver to this dilemma—if he does not cheat his passengers, he can hardly live by his trade.

There is one very curious fact about cab-hire, the truth of which seems to be admitted on all sides; that if, on the one hand, the cabman is more likely to take advantage of an unprotected female than of a man, so, on the other hand, if a woman does insist upon her rights in the matter, she enforces them in a more rigorous manner than men. Men seldom proffer sixpence to the cabman, although entitled to do so if the distance be under a mile; whereas a sixpenny ride is rather in favour among thrifty ladies. Punch once inserted a letter from an imaginary cabman, adverting to the difficulty which the fraternity experience in avoiding knocking down women at the crossings of streets, and otherwise hinting that the feminine half of the creation are sometimes embarrassing personages. The hypothetical writer claims admission for a few words "from a pore Cabby wich you Poke your fun hat, but Live and Let life i say and hear Both side. i ham summond for nookin downd a woman and call a Brute, sir, how can We help when they will no More mind crossing the road then if It was a Private garding, first take Hold of their Clows, then look at the Mud and Makes a face at it, then looks to See wether She shows enuff of her hancles and Then rush dead a Head like charging a Bull, never wunst looking rite and Left, Sir who can pull up at a minnit notice and the Swell hollaring and bawling to look a Life. if women will not Look, she must be Run over. If They have a

beestly dog, it His Wurse, has Then she is hall in a figgit hover the Beast, wich can mind hisself."

As matters now stand, the cab-drivers are paid no regular wages. The owners assert that this could not possibly succeed, as there would be no means of knowing whether the driver brought home each day the sum he actually receives. The system adopted is very much like that which is followed by the organ-grinders and their padroni—bring home a certain sum every night, and do as you like with the rest. This certain sum, however, is only definite for those who choose to strike a bargain on it. It may be as low as eight shillings a day, or as high as eighteen; but the fixed sum the driver must bring home to his master, according as the cab is a four-wheeler or a Hansom, as it is in good or bad condition, as the driver is a dirty reprobate or a respectable man, as the horse is a mere scrag or a good-looking animal, as the period of the year is in the season or out of the season, as there are or are not any public holidays going on. On the Derby Day, the owner of a crack Hansom expects—who can say how much? As the terms of the bargain may vary from week to week, or from day to day, and as it really appears to be no very profitable trade to the owners, we can easily understand that the average net incomes or earnings of the drivers are anything but large. The cabman declares that he does not get much above a guinea a week, taking an average of all the weeks in the year. Whether it be this, or a little more, he certainly works hard enough for it—out in all weathers, plodding along in rain and snow, and getting his meals where he can and when he can.

There is a Street Traffic Bill now under the consideration of parliament, which contains provisions for placing the cabs under the control of the commissioners more stringently than ever, but letting in improvement to this extent;—that if a cab-owner wish to introduce a cab of a superior build or service, to be run at a higher tariff of fares, he may do so, provided the cab obtains a good character on examination; there must, in that case, be a record of fares, per mile and per hour, on plates both inside and outside the vehicle. This may possibly lead to improvement; but it does not touch the principle which many experienced men wish to see fairly tried: that is to say, open competition, leaving the public to pay best those who serve them best. Police control there must necessarily be, for our thoroughfares require to be marshalled more carefully than ever. Cabs may still be licensed, not for the sake of revenue, but to give the police a power of curbing refractory owners and drivers. Nevertheless, the question of fares might be left an open one. Cabmen do not regard the Police as their personal and particular friends; but if the legal enactments were intelligible and reasonable, and not too much in quantity, there is no sufficient reason why the guardians of her Majesty's peace, and the carriers of her Majesty's subjects, should not rub on pretty well together.

It appears that, on the other side of the world, they are not much more free than ourselves from the worry and perplexity about cab law. A correspondent of the Melbourne Argus, in January of the present year, wrote to complain of the state of matters on this subject. He said: "There is a charming confusion in the nomenclature adopted by the City Chamber in the regulations issued respecting them. We are told that a cab is to be charged three shillings an hour, and a carriage six shillings an hour; but as nobody knows what is a cab and what a carriage, the differentiation rests with cabby himself, and, consequently, six shillings is more frequently charged than three." Our London cabman's mouth would water at even three shillings an hour. As a rule, the fraternity is ill-used by the public. It has been always the fashion to denounce them as uncivil, and to commence every discussion about fares as if incivility could only originate with them; whilst in a majority of cases it is the fare who casts the first verbal stone, and that is often a hard one.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

ELIZA FENNING. (THE DANGER OF CONDEMNING TO DEATH ON CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE ALONE.)

THE background of this simple prosaic yet touching story is neither a palace nor a battlefield. The event we record was heralded by no stormy war-trumpets, and succeeded by no outburst of national grief. Yet its catastrophe is that true basis of all tragedy—death, and, moreover, it is a story that has drawn, and will again draw, tears from eyes of all generous and warm-hearted people, who will here see a pure and, no doubt, entirely guiltless young creature entangled in a dreadful and irresistible destiny, and swept ruthlessly into another world without any further resistance than a piteous scream of despair, as she is dashed into the dark and pitiless gulf.

A third-rate London kitchen is perhaps the most unromantic of all places, the most dismal and dingy scene possible for any story. Everywhere it has more or less the same features—the smoky-faced clock ticking off the moments, the three rows of blue willow-pattern plates, the cat dozing on the scrubby hearth-rug, the ill-used blackbird in the willow cage in the cavernous area, the splashed and grimy windows dulling even the brightest sunbeam, the dusty bonnet on the nail behind the door, the jack-towel printed with black finger-marks, the great generous fire—the only joyous thing in the place, except the cook's reddened face, and the little square looking-glass hanging over the dresser, in which the housemaid reviews with approval her smiling face and bright eyes every three minutes before her sweetheart, the baker, raps at the back door. But dreary as the half-subterranean kitchen is, still more dismal are generally its subordinate rooms, its murderous coal-hole, its dark back wash-house, its sour-smelling, mouldy beer-cellar, its dim

lumber-cupboards, where black-beetles and rats alone hold holiday; and even more ineffably miserable than this part of the premises is the area itself, with often one crippled, dusty, mottled-leaved *Aucuba* in an old red oil-jar, fighting for existence against soot, drought, and general misery and destitution.

Probably not far unlike our rough picture was the kitchen of No. 68, Chancery-lane, on Monday, the 20th of March, 1815. No. 68 was then occupied by Mr. Robert Turner, a law-stationer, his apprentices and family. The shop was, of course, the usual congeries of blanched parchment, red tape, green ferreting, ink, quills, blank law forms, penknives, almanacks, and other apparatus of law, and sometimes of justice. Eliza Fenning, a young cook, was bustling about the kitchen, getting a pastry-board ready to make some dumplings. The girl had been in the service of Mr. Turner only about seven weeks. Eliza was a good-natured, amiable girl; but three weeks before, her mistress had reproved her for romping with one of the apprentices, named Gadsden; but as the apprentice was clearly in the wrong, and had been rude to her, the mistress had withdrawn the warning she had threatened, and thought no more of the matter.

This unjust complaint had, however, preyed on the girl's mind, and she had been rather less respectful and somewhat sullen since the occurrence, and had told her fellow-servant, Sarah Peer, the housemaid, that she should never like the family any more; with several young men about, the mistress had been right in being particular; but the girl was sensitive, and thought that blame had fallen unjustly on her.

On the Monday morning early, there came a ring at the Chancery-lane door, and Eliza's fellow-servant, Sarah Peer, ran up to answer the bell. It proved to be Joseph Penson, a man from Mr. Edmonds's, the brewer, in Gray's Inn-lane. He had brought some yeast that Eliza had asked for some days before, to make some dumplings. The yeast had been taken out of the stilliards where the casks lay, and from the place from whence the bakers usually had it. Sarah emptied it into a white basin, thanked the man, chatted for one moment, flirted for another, then ran racing downstairs with the yeast, and gave it to Eliza. The new cook instantly went up to Mrs. Turner in the dining-room, and reported triumphantly that the brewer had at last brought some yeast. The girl had repeatedly teased Mrs. Turner to let her make some dumplings, and she now again announced herself as a capital hand at making them. She seemed particularly anxious to show her skill, and the small vanity was in the eyes of the mistress rather commendable than otherwise. Mrs. Turner, however, informed Eliza that she did not on such occasions trouble the brewer's man, but always had the dough from the baker's, because it was thought the best; but having the yeast, she said, Eliza could now achieve her triumph, and make some dumplings

next day; the poor girl retired to her own dominions delighted.

The next day (Tuesday), Mrs. Turner descends into the family vault to arrange the dinner and set the house in trim for the day. She orders the yeast dumplings, but tells Eliza to first make a beefsteak pie for the apprentices' dinner. Eliza is to go out and get the steaks in Brooks' Market, and afterwards carry the pie to the baker's, but when the dumpling dough is once made she is not to leave it till finished. Eliza is pleased and docile; so it shall be; she takes down the flour-dredger, the clean pastry-board, the rolling-pin, the flour-basin, and begins with a hearty good will, singing as she works. That is half-past eleven. At twelve, the pie ascends the area steps on its way to the baker's. The apprentices dine at two, the family at three. On Eliza's return, Mrs. Turner, a watchful housewife, now thoroughly roused on the question of dumplings, dives down again into the dim kitchen, and orders the dumpling dough to be mixed with milk and water. She then says:

"I suppose, Eliza, there is no occasion for me to stop?"

The girl replies: "Oh no, ma'am; I know very well how to do it."

In half an hour, Mrs. Turner dives again, finds Eliza serenely triumphant, and the dough set in a pan before the fire, on the bright steel fender, to rise. Several times afterwards, Mrs. Turner returns to the charge, lifts the cloth from the pan, and eyes the dough, that, however, obstinately refuses to rise. It still lies in an unusual way, and in an odd shape. Before twelve, the six dumplings are divided ready to put into the pan; the other servant, Sarah Peer, who is going out for the day, has been up-stairs ever since a quarter-past eleven, mending a counterpane, and no one but Eliza and Mrs. Turner has seen the dough. Mrs. Turner merely remarks in a disappointed way to Eliza that the dough does not rise, and the young cook confidently replies:

"It will rise before I want it."

At two o'clock the beefsteak pie was sent for; it returned savoury and hot, and Gadsden came rattling down, hungry as a wolf, after copying deeds all the morning. Sarah Peer, the housemaid, was going out for the day to see her sister at Hackney, and the conversation was about her going. Sarah was not on very good terms with the cook. Their tempers clashed, Eliza considering Sarah as sly and artful, and Sarah having many causes of complaint (as she thought), especially a recent case of some apron of hers being taken by Eliza for a duster. There might, too, be a little rivalry for Gadsden. The girls were now, however, friends again, and the old difference had been quite forgotten, at least by Eliza.

Gadsden handed the dishes, and drank the girls' healths in small beer, with the gallantry of the young law-stationer in good society. Presently, as it got towards three, Eliza asked the housemaid to run out and get a halfpenny-

worth of milk, as there was not enough in the house left from breakfast, to make sauce for the dumplings. She went; then the sauce was made, and the dinner served up to the family. Having done this, the housemaid prepared to start for Hackney, and Eliza rested placidly after her labours, waiting for the bell that would be the order for clearing away.

Mr. and Mrs. Turner are dining, and Mr. Turner's father is with them. (Mrs. Turner, the law-stationer's mother, was at her house at Lambeth.) The dinner is steaks and potatoes, and the yeast dumplings. The appearance of the dumplings is unsatisfactory; they are black and heavy instead of being white and light, and Mrs. Turner (vexed at the failure after Eliza's teasing) remarks the fact to the housemaid, who brought them up and removed the cover. Mrs. Turner helps her husband and father-in-law to some, and takes a small piece of the not very inviting spongy paste herself. The front door slams: that is Sarah Peer gone out for the day.

All at once, Mrs. Turner feels a death-like faintness come over her; a cold dew breaks out upon her forehead. The room seems to turn round. Then comes on a violent pain, an extreme excruciating pain, that increases every moment. Quietly she rises from the table, steals up-stairs, and throws herself on her bed almost insensible, and, as she thinks, about to die. A deadly vomiting begins, and lasts for hours. Her head and chest swell, her tongue becomes enlarged. She remains alone and in great torture, wondering that no one comes to her assistance, but on at last going down-stairs she finds both her father and husband also grievously ill, and apparently poisoned; but how, by what, and by whom, they have as yet no suspicion.

Almost immediately after Mrs. Turner left the room, her father-in-law, going down-stairs quietly to his own special parlour, met his son in the passage at the foot of the stairs. He had been very sick, and his eyes were swollen and staring. The old man was alarmed, and in a few minutes afterwards, he too began to violently vomit, and instantly an intolerable burning pain spread across his stomach and chest. In the mean time, Roger Gadsden, the apprentice, had gone down into the kitchen during the family dinner, perhaps in search of some tit-bit, perhaps to whisper a word of flattery to his new sweetheart, Eliza. The untoward dumplings had just been brought down-stairs, and there was a dumpling and a half lying black and heavy on the plate. Gadsden took up a knife and fork, and playfully began to experiment on the cold dumpling, but only ate a piece about as big as a walnut. He then took a bit of bread and sopped up the white sauce in the boat. These young sedentary apprentices can eat anything and at any time. He then returned back to his high stool in the office. Ten minutes afterwards—that is, about half-past three—his master, Mr. Robert Turner, came to him, and leaning on one of the desks, complained of being frightfully ill. About ten minutes after that, the terrible epidemic, that

had spread like wildfire from life to life, affected the apprentice; he, too, fell ill, but not so ill as his master, who had eaten a dumpling and a half. The family being all apparently dying, the apprentice volunteered to go off to Lambeth and fetch Mr. Robert Turner's mother. On his way, the apprentice became much worse, and thought that he too was going to die.

Old Mrs. Turner arrived in Chancery-lane about eight o'clock; she found her son, her husband, and her son's wife, stretched on their beds in agonising pain, and still tormented by sickness. Very soon after old Mrs. Turner's arrival, Eliza Fenning was also taken ill, and began to vomit and show the same symptoms as the rest. Mrs. Turner met her at the stair-foot, and, having already heard the story from the frightened apprentice, began immediately about the unfortunate dumplings.

"Oh, those devilish dumplings!" said the old lady.

Eliza replied, "It was not the dumplings, but the milk, ma'am."

"What milk?"

"The halfpenny-worth of milk that Sally fetched for the sauce which Mrs. Turner made."

"That cannot be; it could not be the sauce." Nor could it have been, because Mr. Robert Turner, who had not touched the sauce, was worse than any of the others.

But Eliza had her own theory (poor girl), although it slightly wavered.

"Yes," she said; "for Gadsden ate a very little bit of dumpling, not bigger than a nut, but he licked up three-parts of a boat of sauce with a bit of bread."

The family had already sent for a friend and neighbour. They now sent for Mr. John Marshall, a surgeon. He arrived about a quarter before nine, and at nine Eliza's fellow-servant returned from Hackney. The family were already suspicious and alarmed, because Eliza, who had cooked the fatal dinner, had not evinced any interest in their illness or any desire to help them. How suspicion puts out the eyes even of honest people! The reason was obvious to any one but the frightened law-stationer and his family. The poor girl was found by the surgeon lying unheeded on the stairs, in great agony, and with exactly the same symptoms as the Turners. At that time Mr. Robert Turner and his wife were both in bed, complaining of violent and excruciating pain, and affected with irresistible sickness. The symptoms of all were unmistakably those following poisoning by arsenic.

The suspicion of the family had already fallen strongly and threateningly upon the poor young servant-girl. In the morning following that alarming day, the elder Mr. Turner began seriously to prosecute inquiries. He tried to ascertain if poison had ever been kept in the house, and if any traces of arsenic could be found in the kitchen, or in the relics of yesterday's dinner. All at once he remembered (in a flash) that there had been for a long time two

packets of arsenic for mice, kept carelessly in an open drawer in the office, facing the fireplace. The poison had been in two flat packets, tied together very tight, and labelled :

"Arsenic—Deadly Poison."

The drawer in which the poison had been kept, was a drawer in which waste-paper was also put. The girl had been seen to go to the drawer for paper. Eliza Fenning had access to the room after the apprentice unlocked it in the morning; but not at night, when it was kept shut. On inquiry, the poison had been seen by Gadsden on the 7th of March, but not since that date. That was mysterious, and must be traced further. The old gentleman then went into the kitchen to peer about. He looked into every pan for flour, yeast, or remains of dumpling. He found at last, a brown pan stuck round with some residue of the dumpling dough. Mr. Turner cautiously swilled the pan with water, and stirred it with a spoon until he had made the dough into a pasty liquid. Then, to his horror, he found, on setting the pan down for half a minute, and subsequently slanting the liquid, a suspicious-looking white powder trail slowly over the bottom of the pan.

Mr. Turner showed this to several persons, and then looked it up until Mr. Marshall, the surgeon, came. Mr. Marshall looked grave when he saw the white powder. He soon carefully examined the pan, and washed it round with a tea-kettleful of hot water. He stirred the liquid, let it subside, and decanted it off. He then washed it a second time. The result was the deposit of half a tea-spoonful of white powder, and that white powder was arsenic. In the fragments of pure yeast, and in the flour-tub, there was no arsenic. Mr. Turner also showed to Mr. Marshall, the knives and forks with which the dumplings had been eaten; they were quite black in the blades, and that blackness the surgeon attributed to their having touched arsenic. Mr. Turner then cross-examined the unhappy girl, on whom all faces now frowned and looked hard and condemning. The old man asked the girl sternly, how she came to introduce ingredients that had been so prejudicial to them? Eliza Fenning replied that it had not been in the dumplings, but in the milk Sarah Peer brought in. It was in the milk; must have been in the milk; that she persisted in. No one but herself, she said, positively and frankly, had (to her knowledge) mixed or had had anything to do with the dumplings.

The Turners' faces grew darker and sterner. The housemaid left Eliza alone, and was silent when she spoke. The old man looked pitying, but inflexible.

They whispered when she entered the room, then became gloomily silent till she left it. Even Gadsden avoided her when he came down to the kitchen. No one seemed inclined to take food from her hands. But worse was to come. On the morning of the 23rd, Mr. Turner entered the kitchen, followed by a dogged-looking man, who told her to

put on her bonnet at once and follow him. Where? Why, "to the Hatton Garden police-office." Charge—attempting to poison the family of Mr. Orlibar Turner, on the 21st of March.

While sitting sobbing in an ante-room of that (to her) dreadful place, Eliza Fenning was asked by Thisselton, the officer who had apprehended her, and had examined her pockets and box, without finding anything suspicious, if she had at all suspected the flour? The poor girl said, in a simple unsuspicious way, that she had made a beefsteak pudding of the same flour with which she had made the dumplings, and that she and her fellow-servant and one of the apprentices had dined off the pie. Thisselton then said that if anything bad had been in the flour, it must have hurt them as well as her. She then said she had thought there was something in the yeast; she had noticed a white settlement in it after she had used it; or the other girl, who was very sly and artful, might have put something in the milk. Poor creature! She was evidently racking her brain for all possible causes of the intended crime, or of the accident, whichever it had been.

The witnesses were all strongly biased against this poor defenceless creature, and on the 30th she was committed for trial. Gadsden, when examined, mentioned that as he was cutting the dumpling, Eliza had said to him (a mere good-natured warning):

"Gadsden, don't eat that; it is cold and heavy; it will do you no good."

The trial came on at the Old Bailey on Tuesday, April 11, 1815. The prisoner was indicted under the 43rd of George the Third, c. 58, which made it a capital offence (everything was capital in the then bloodthirsty state of the law) to administer a deadly poison with intent to murder. The recorder (a notorious hangman), John Silvester, presided as judge. Mr. Gurney (afterwards baron of the Exchequer) conducted the case for the prosecution. Mr. Ally (irritable Adolphus's irritable enemy) defended the prisoner, and was most painstaking and elaborate in his cross-examinations.

It was the savage and merciless custom of those days not to allow the counsel to speak for a prisoner upon the facts. No final recapitulation and appeal to the jury was permitted; the jury's often confused minds were allowed to grope for the truth amid all the prejudiced statements of interested witnesses, the violence of hurried prosecutors, and the natural difficulties of the case. In charges of misdemeanour in civil actions and where life was not involved, but property (far dearer to our Draconic lawgivers of the eighteenth century) was, the privilege was not withheld from the barrister for the defence. It was not till 1831 that this cruel and disgraceful anomaly was done away with.

From the beginning, Mr. Silvester inclined against the prisoner. At the close of his charge, his bias approached criminality. He decided that the poison was in the dough, be-

cause persons who had not touched the sauce had also been seized; therefore it was not in the milk; nor could it have been in the general mass of flour, because no one who had merely eaten the beefsteak pie had suffered. But in the following part of his remarks, he dwelt on Eliza's indifference to the sufferings of the family, suppressing all mention of the fact that she too was poisoned, and was at that very time in equal agony. He said:

"Gentlemen, you have now heard the evidence given on this trial, and the case lies in a very narrow compass. There are but two questions for your consideration, and these are, the fact of poison having been administered, in all, to four persons; and by what hand such poison was given. That these persons were poisoned appears certain from the evidence of Mrs. Charlotte Turner, Orlihar Turner, Roger Gadsden, the apprentice, and Robert Turner, for each of these persons ate of the dumplings, and were all more or less affected; that is, they were every one poisoned. That the poison was in the dough of which these dumplings were composed has been fully proved, I think, by the testimony of the surgeon who examined the remains of the dough left in the dish in which the dumplings had been mixed and divided; and he deposes that the powder which had subsided at the bottom of the dish was arsenic. That the arsenic was not in the flour, I think, appears plain, from the circumstance that the crust of a pie had been made that very morning with some of the same flour of which the dumplings were made, and that the persons who dined off the pie felt no inconvenience whatever; that it was not in the yeast, nor in the milk, has been also proved; neither could it be in the sauce, for two of the persons who were ill never touched a particle of the sauce, and yet were violently affected with retching and sickness. From all these circumstances it must follow that the poisonous ingredient was in the dough alone; for, besides that the persons who partook of the dumplings at dinner were all more or less affected from what they had eaten, it was observed by one of the witnesses that the dough retained the same shape it had when first put into the dish to rise, and that it appeared dark and was heavy, and, in fact, never did rise. The other question for your consideration is, by what hand the poison was administered; and although we have nothing before us but circumstantial evidence, yet it often happens that circumstances are more conclusive than the most positive testimony. The prisoner, when taxed with poisoning the dumplings, threw the blame first on the milk, next on the yeast, and then on the sauce; but it has been proved, most satisfactorily, that none of these contained it, and that it was in the dumplings alone, which no person but the prisoner had made. Gentlemen, if poison had been given even to a dog, one would suppose that common humanity would have prompted us to assist it in its agonies: here is the case of a master and a mistress being both poisoned, and no assistance was offered. Gentlemen, I have

now stated all the facts as they have arisen, and I leave the case in your hands, being fully persuaded that, whatever your verdict may be, you will conscientiously discharge your duty both to your God and to your country."

The prisoner's defence was extremely touching, because it contained no oratorical cant, no quibbles, no counter-charges, no cowardly accusations, but merely a few simple-hearted remarks denying malice against the family, which was supposed to be her motive, and explaining that she had been too ill on the Tuesday to assist her master. She said:

"I am truly innocent of the whole charge. I am innocent; indeed I am! I liked my place. I was very comfortable. Gadsden behaved rudely to me; my mistress came and saw me; she said she did not like it. I said, 'Ma'am, it is Gadsden that has been rough to me.' The next morning I said, 'I hope you do not think anything of what passed last night.' She was in a great passion, and said she would not put up with it. I was to go away directly. I did not look on Mrs. Turner, but the old lady, as my mistress. In the evening the old lady came to town. I said, 'I am going away to-night.' Mrs. Turner said, 'Do not think any more about it; I don't.' She asked Mrs. Robert Turner if she was willing for me to go. She said, 'No, she thought no more about it.' As to my master saying I did not assist him, I was too ill. I had no concern with that drawer at all: when I wanted a piece of paper, I always asked for it."

The prisoner called five witnesses, who gave her the character of a good-natured and amiable girl; but they were heard most impatiently by the partial judge, and one of them he summarily put down. William Fenning, the prisoner's father, greatly agitated, stepped up into the witness-box, and said: "I am the father of the unfortunate girl, my lord; if you won't hear her, I hope you will hear me."

He was proceeding to relate, amongst other circumstances, his having been denied access to his daughter when she was lying in great agony below stairs in Turner's house, from the effects of the poisoned dumplings; but the recorder would not let him go on, and put his hand out, motioning him to leave the witness-box, exclaiming that he could not hear him—it was too late. He must go down. The father left the box, tears streaming over his face.

The jury were quiet, dull, respectable people, who did not by any means wish to see servants trying to poison their masters with impunity. In a few minutes after retiring, they returned to their box, and, in answer to the mechanically put but portentous question, the foreman stood up and uttered the fatal word "Guilty."

The unhappy girl fell back in convulsions, and was carried, screaming, from the court. She was soon brought back, pale, dazed, and stunned; the recorder put on the black cap and passed judgment of death upon her in a cool business-like way. That was over. Not a sort of girl one would have suspected of such a thing

as this; but there was never any telling! So perhaps chatted the hanging recorder that evening over his Madeira. Mr. Ally, keen and subtle, had perhaps other feelings on the subject as that night in solitude he mused over the subject; but he was powerless, except to urge petitions to government.

In a very able article, entitled *Legal Puzzles*, in *Blackwood's Magazine* some years ago, the "learned and able writer" sums up the convincing (as he thinks) arguments of the guilt of Eliza Fenning. They are these:

1. That she was convicted, despite of the defence of able counsel (who was not allowed to speak in her favour).

2. That from the 11th of April to the 26th of July the case was repeatedly investigated by the law officers of the crown, but nothing fresh transpired in her favour. (The hanging recorder was present at these consultations, and his vanity would be of course roused not to let the verdict be reversed. That is human nature.)

3. That though the girl ate a portion of the dumpling after she had warned Gadsden of its heaviness, she did so when old Mrs. Turner was expected, to cunningly disarm suspicion. (Killing one's self is an odd way of disarming suspicion.)

4. That she made different and contradictory statements as to the food in which the poison was mixed. (How could a frightened innocent girl, who was merely guessing, do anything else but make tentative remarks?)

The arguments for her innocence are, we think, incontrovertibly stronger.

1. There was no adequate motive for the crime, nor was the girl by any means one of those sullen malignant tempers who kill for mere revenge. A month before she had been rated, justly or unjustly; she then had expressed momentary anger, perhaps exaggerated by her evidently hostile fellow-servant. She herself said in court that she liked her place, and was comfortable.

2. No poison was traced to her, and she was never seen with any poison.

3. Her caution to Gadsden was only kind, professional, and natural, and her own sufferings from the poison were most strongly in her favour. Moreover, let us remember that no one had then told her that the family had suspected the dumplings.

4. Still stronger in her favour is the fact that she made no effort to remove the pan, which still contained poison, and which, after all, furnished the only positive proof that arsenic had been mixed with the food which had been eaten.

A little imagination could conceive a thousand ways by which the poison, kept with such criminal carelessness in an open office drawer, had got mixed with waste paper, and been thoughtlessly taken down into the kitchen. Let us suppose the girl went, as she was allowed, to the office drawer for waste paper to light the fire; had more than she wanted; and carried the residue downstairs for the use of the kitchen. The poison, a year and a half tumbled about unheeded in the

drawer, in a tight flat packet pinched with twine, might have leaked at one corner, and have sprinkled the paper to the extent of a spoonful, at least, without necessarily being noticed. That paper may have been used to rub out the pan, or to put the flour in, or for some purpose connected with the fatal meal.

The popular mind has a keen sense of injustice. That excellent and unswerving man, Sir Samuel Romilly, boldly and generously recorded his belief in Fenning's innocence. In Lord Sidmouth's time such an impugnement of the governing wisdom was not without its dangers. The people had borne pretty well for some centuries being hanged for stealing five shillings, for stealing a strip of cloth from a bleaching-ground, for passing a bad shilling; old men and children had gone to the gallows in hundreds for the smallest felonies; but now a terrible conviction seized people that judges, in their anxiety to purge the commonweal of perilous stuff, often leaned so much towards the gibbet that they sometimes forgot justice. There had been in this case palpable and cruel prejudice or folly; innocent facts had been wilfully distorted into proofs of guilt. The public is but a grand jury, and it refused to consider the girl as a would-be murderess. She had not sufficient motive—so many unaccountable accidents it was clear might have led to the apparent crime. The friends of the poor girl almost compelled Lord Eldon to rouse himself in the matter. What was etiquette when a human life was depending on the turn of a moment? The lord chancellor, the recorder (now Sir John Silvester, Bart.), and Mr. Beckett met at Lord Sidmouth's offices. They decided that nothing had occurred that should stay the hangman's eager hand. The bias of government then, was to resent with arrogance all popular interference. The servants had got into the bad habit of defying the masters who paid them. The lawyers were, in fact, so certain of the justice of the verdict, that Lord Eldon, to satisfy his own—seldom satisfied—mind, and to put a stop to the doubts of irritated and alarmed people, held another meeting the night before the execution, and came again, singularly enough, to the very determination to which they had long since determined to come. To negative a recorder's sentence would be to confess that the sentences of that good servant of the crown had been often unjust. That would never do.

The unhappy victim of some unaccountable accident was put to death on Wednesday, July 26th, 1815. It is a sorry sight even to see a bull-necked murderer, with ape's forehead and cruel cretin eyes, appear upon the scaffold before the Debtors' Door, trembling as he unconsciously repeats the prayer. How agonising is the shuddering look as the sickly eye is raised involuntarily and falls on that one horrible object that seems to fill heaven and earth—the gallows! But there was a young and probably innocent girl to be lifted up and killed before ten thousand pitying people. No feverish hatred, no screams

of delight, as the poor girl, dressed in white (at her own desire), ascended the steps firmly. The interest was intense, because it was fervently expected that she would make in public a final and decided denial of the crime of which she had been found guilty. So it proved.

Mr. Peter Burke, who has taken great interest in the innocence of this victim of bad law, says that she ascended the scaffold about a quarter-past eight.

"A few minutes before she ascended the scaffold, the Reverend Mr. Cotton, the Ordinary of Newgate, asked her whether she had any communication to make; she paused for a moment, and then said with firmness and strong emphasis, 'Before the just and Almighty God, and by the faith of the Holy Sacrament I have taken, I am innocent of the offence with which I am charged.' She afterwards said, in an indistinct tone of voice, what seemed to the bystanders to be, 'that the truth of the business would be disclosed in the course of the day.' The Reverend Mr. Cotton, anxious to learn precisely what she uttered, requested her to repeat her words. She then said, 'I am innocent, and I hope, in God, the truth may be disclosed in the course of the day.' She prayed fervently, and seemed perfectly resigned to her fate. On being asked in the last awful moment to confess her crime, she unhesitatingly declared, as she had done throughout her imprisonment, in the most solemn manner, her perfect innocence. She also expressed her resignation, and her confidence of entering the kingdom of Heaven. This she repeated while the executioner was preparing for his fearful office. The last words of Eliza Fenning, on being addressed by the attendant clergyman, were, 'I know my situation, and may I never enter the kingdom of Heaven, to which I feel confident I am going, if I am not innocent.'

"A thrill of agony ran through the hearts of that vast crowd when the bolt fell, and the slender form in white swayed in the wind and rain. For her, elsewhere there was mercy; we do not doubt it."

The executioner, after demanding fees oppressive to poor people, although in this instance no more than fourteen shillings, was allowed to surrender the body of Eliza Fenning to her friends. They resolved on a public funeral, as at once an assertion of innocence and an appeal to popular sympathy. She was buried on the 31st of July, at St. George's-the-Martyr. There were ten thousand persons in the churchyard, as the coffin, inscribed,

ELIZA FENNING,

Died July 26th, 1815, aged 22 years,

was lowered into the grave. To that grave-side, there had followed the body, a long procession. Six young women dressed in white had supported the pall. The coffin was preceded by a dozen constables, and followed by about thirty more.

There were several hundred mourners. Many thousand persons succeeded them. The windows, and even the tops of the houses, were thronged by spectators. The people of London wept for her, and the great generous heart of London is seldom in the wrong in such a case.

As usual, however, when partisan feeling is excited, the recorder party set afloat many hasty, unsifted, and cruel calumnies. It was reported that Eliza Fenning had, when a child, been turned out of the schools in Lincoln's Inn-fields for dissolute conduct; that, at Mr. Turner's, she had nightly visited the apprentices' bedroom; that, even in Newgate, she had fallen in love with some of the prisoners, and written to them in terms of the grossest licentiousness. With these things we have nothing to do; the question is simply, did she intentionally mix poison with the Turners' food? We are filled with a deep conviction that she was entirely innocent. With many persons the case will, perhaps, always remain a problem. In the Annual Register for 1857, it is stated, on the authority of Mr. Gurney, that Eliza Fenning, on the morning of her execution, confessed the crime to Mr. James Upton, a Baptist minister. If this statement were true, it would authoritatively end the matter, but we disbelieve it in toto. Weak ministers, unaccustomed to give spiritual advice to persons condemned to death, get flurried and confused in a prison cell. Importuned to confess, the poor girl, no doubt, made some general confession of her utter sinfulness; and this the Baptist minister, perhaps previously prejudiced, may have mistaken or exaggerated. We implicitly believe that he did this (it may be, with some little unconscious touch of vanity in his own powers of working repentance, but we do not think, wilfully). The evidence of Mr. Cotton, a man of tried experience, is expressly contrary to any such testimony. Curran used to declaim glowingly on the unhappy fate of Eliza Fenning; Hone, the ardent politician and author of the Every Day Book, published an authentic report of her trial, as an antidote to the garbled summary of it put forth in the Old Bailey Sessions Paper, with curious letters from the prisoner herself; and, in our own time, Mr. Charles Phillips wrote a brilliant rhapsody on the fate of one—"so young, so fair, so innocent"—cut down in the morning, with all life's brightness only in its dawn. "Little," says this writer, "did it profit thee that a city mourned over thy early grave, and that the most eloquent of men (Curran, a fellow-countryman) did justice to thy memory!"

We reserve for our concluding paragraph, the statement that the Judge who tried this case was an Advocate against the girl, and was unfeeling, and unfair.

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MABEL'S PROGRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

BOOK III.

CHAPTER XI. CLEMENT HAS NOT TIME TO ANSWER MR. JONES.

CLEMENT CHARLEWOOD, as Miss O'Brien had shrewdly suspected, had not been detained by any business so urgent as to have compelled his presence at Hammerham, had he willed that it should be otherwise. He had, indeed, said a few words to his father respecting the blue square letter received that afternoon, and had told him that he (Clement) did not intend to join the pic-nic party, but would go down to the office and answer Jones—the sender of the blue letter aforesaid—about that matter of the new Corn Exchange at Eastfield. "I'm not at all sure that it will be worth our while to send in a tender for the contract, sir," he had said, with his mind apparently full of the subject of Mr. Jones's communication. But then Clement Charlewood had walked to the office, and had sat down at his desk with the blue envelope before him, and leaning his head on his hands, had silently endured an hour's acute anguish.

Since the day on which he had last parted from Mabel Earnshaw at Eastfield, she had seldom been absent from his thoughts. He had told himself before that final interview that if she should still persist in her intention of going on the stage, he would resolutely pluck from his heart all hope and intention of winning her for his wife. That should be the decisive trial, and if she should prove deaf alike to the pleadings of love and the warnings of friendship, it would become him to set himself resolutely to stifle his unrequited attachment. But that had been, as I have said, before his parting interview at Eastfield, and whilst the unacknowledged hope was yet glowing at the bottom of his heart, that Mabel would yield to his disinterested love. That the hope had been frustrated, the reader knows; and yet Clement Charlewood had by no means kept his resolution of giving up all thought of winning Mabel for his wife. He knew that the step she had taken had put a still greater barrier between them than that which previously existed, and which was already sufficiently formidable in the eyes

of his family; Mabel's lack, namely, of wealth or social rank superior to his own. These obstacles, indeed, he did not much regard, for his mind was quite clear as to this matter. And he could boldly argue his cause with his father, as long as the objections of the latter only related to Mabel's poverty and social obscurity. But as to this step which Mabel had taken, in despite of all counsel and warning, Clement felt that it would be more difficult for him to plead with others in her defence, inasmuch as his own judgment and his own oft-uttered opinion went against her. Nevertheless, in some vague way, which he did not attempt to define to himself, all obstacles were to be surmounted, if only Mabel could be brought to love him. She was at least fancy-free; and as long as her heart continued disengaged, so long he should cherish a hope of winning her. In short, he loved deeply and hoped persistently; but with the habitual shy reserve of his character, he kept all this within his own breast. His father was comfortably satisfied that Clement had dismissed his love-lancy completely from his mind; and none of the family—save, perhaps, Penelope, who was occasionally troubled by a lurking suspicion that all was not quite well with her brother—imagined that the thought of Mabel Earnshaw ever caused him one second's uneasiness. The advent of Geraldine O'Brien at Bramley Manor had, indeed, given rise to quite other hopes and speculations. Miss O'Brien's fortune, it is true, was small, but she was well-born, well-bred, and well-connected, and—crowning glory in the eyes of the rich contractor—her grandfather had been an Irish peer. Man cannot live by bread alone, nor even by bread with an unlimited quantity of butter on it. The most prosaic people have some faculty or aspiration or ideal, which craves to be fed in a quite different manner and on far different food from any recognisable by the five senses.

Mr. Charlewood was not highly imaginative, but he had some imagination; and his imagination, such as it was, declared that to be the father-in-law of a lord's granddaughter must needs be a most desirable position, and an object of ambition for which it was quite worth while to strive very earnestly.

He therefore observed with great satisfaction that Miss O'Brien—besides the halo of aristocracy, which made her admirable in his

own eyes—possessed a great many charms and qualities calculated to attract the admiration of people to whom the halo aforesaid was invisible or unimportant; and she had not been many days under his roof before Mr. Charlewood had resolved that if it were possible, he would bring about a marriage between his eldest son and Miss Geraldine O'Brien.

"Clem likes her very much, I'm sure," said Mr. Charlewood to his confidante, Penelope; "and I'm sure I don't know how he could help it, for she's charming, quite charming, and they're a great deal together."

"Clem does like her very much, papa, and she is charming, and they are a great deal together; but still——"

"But what? Do you mean that she don't like him?"

"No, papa. I certainly don't mean that."

"Perhaps you think she would not be satisfied on the score of family; but, Penny, these high folks know the value of money every bit as well as the rest of the world. Wealth, my girl, can command everything—almost everything, at all events; and Miss O'Brien's too sensible not to see that."

Clement, on his part, was inclined to like the gay clever Irish girl very much indeed; and it was true that he rode with her, walked with her, and talked with her, with a constancy that might have almost seemed to justify Mr. Charlewood's hopes. But if that gentleman could have overheard the conversations that took place between Miss O'Brien and her cavalier during their long rides in the pretty sylvan lanes around Hammerham, his complacent assurance that matters were going as he wished might have been somewhat disturbed.

Clement, as I have said before, had a very vivid and heartfelt interest in the wide-stretching business of the great firm of Gandy and Charlewood; and it was an interest, if not altogether apart from, yet much superior to, the mere money-grinding power of its vast machinery. He was proud of its high repute, its unblemished integrity, its daring and enlightened speculations. The view of trade and traders presented to the young Irish lady by Clement Charlewood's conversation was an altogether new one for her; and Clement found in Miss O'Brien an intelligent and interested listener to all he could say upon his favourite theme.

Perhaps it would be too much to say that Mr. Clement Charlewood would have found absolutely the same amount of pleasure in these equestrian excursions if his companion, however intelligent, had been awkward and ugly instead of being, as she undoubtedly was, a handsome, graceful, distinguished looking woman. Miss O'Brien's power of understanding and appreciating Clement's conversation clearly did not in any way depend upon the jaunty droop of her feather, the admirable fit of her riding-habit, the small well-shaped hand that held the bridle so lightly, or the perfect ease and skill with which she managed her horse.

But Clement Charlewood was a mortal man, and I should be very loth to affirm positively that these things did not tend to make his self-imposed task of instructing Geraldine O'Brien as to the doings of Gandy and Charlewood more pleasant than its intrinsic merits might have done.

But any thought that was disloyal to Mabel, any faintest idea of love-making, was very far from his mind.

And the lady?

The lady took a very great deal of interest in the last new line of South American railway, and the plans for the erection of a large pile of government buildings in British India.

The reading of Lady Popham's letter had struck a severe blow at Clement's inmost heart. He alone of all the Charlewood family had been quite sure from the first mention of the charming Ophelia, that Mabel and no other was being described; for although he was not aware that she was acting under a feigned name, he had learned from Mrs. Saxelby that she was to make her first attempt at Kilclare. Lady Popham's praise and patronage were distasteful to him, perhaps from the assurance they seemed to convey that Mabel was likely to continue in her present path; perhaps because they realised, and, as it were, brought home to him the fact which had hitherto seemed hazy and distant, that Mabel had in very earnest commenced a theatrical career. But what followed was worse; ten thousand times worse. The mention of Alfred Trescott, and the coupling of his name with Mabel's by the garrulous old lady, had cut Clement to the heart. As he sat with his arms folded on his desk he suffered the keenest pangs of doubt and jealousy, and the wounding of that sensitive shrinking delicacy—almost like a second and finer self-love—with which such men as Clement regard the image of the woman they love in their inmost soul. His pure proud Mabel, his innocent, candid, unprotected darling, she to be soiled by contact with such a one as he knew Alfred Trescott to be! The idea pierced him like a knife. Again and again he told himself that it was impossible; that Mabel would never stoop to think for one moment of Alfred Trescott; that the romantic credulous old woman had fancied or misunderstood the whole matter; that the wily and unprincipled young fellow had, for his own purposes, been using Mabel's name with a boastful lie in his mouth. It was impossible that this thing should be. Impossible, incredible; an insult and a treason to his love to give it one instant's credence. And yet, and yet, the gnawing doubt refused to be so stilled. It may be urged that where Clement had bestowed a perfect love he should have given also a perfect trust. But that perfect trust, which comes from a sure, almost intuitive knowledge, of how certain circumstances and conditions will affect another person, is usually the slow growth of years of intimate companionship. As far as an unwavering belief in Mabel's absolute pure-heartedness and goodness went, his trust was

perfect. But might not her best and most generous qualities be worked upon to her own detriment? How was her clear youth a match for the dark cunning of one so unscrupulous as Alfred Trescott? Had he not himself, he, Clement, had he not been witness how the very unselfishness and unsuspecting nobility of nature that he so loved had led her to take this fatally mistaken step which it seemed was destined to lead her on to unimagined ruin and disaster?

"I wish to God," moaned Clement, clasping his hot head between his hands, "that she had never gone to the music meeting—never seen that child, never made the acquaintance of that accursed family! Would to God, would to God that she had never known them!"

By degrees came the thought, what was he to do in the matter? What step did it first behove him to take to ascertain the truth of this rumour, and to avert its fulfilment should it prove well founded? Clement had given Mabel his solemn assurance that let the result of his suit to her be what it would, he should ever be her true and faithful friend, holding himself bound to serve and aid her at all times, to the utmost of his power, and Clement Charlewood was accustomed to attach to his words the full and simple meaning that they would honestly bear, and to avoid rhetorical flourishes or vague exaggerations in his speech. When, therefore, he wrenched his mind away from the contemplation of his own sufferings, and began to consider what it were best for him to do, he had this promise steadily in his remembrance, and was resolved to keep it to the letter. His first idea was naturally to have recourse to Mrs. Saxelby. But on further reflection he abandoned that project for the present. His experience of the pretty gentle widow had taught him that, although she would accept his advice with the most flattering reliance on his judgment, and a profusion of graceful acknowledgments, she would certainly never have resolution to act upon it, if to act involved any vigorous exertion of her own will, or any prolonged opposition to the will of others.

"If she knows this wretched rumour," argued Clement, "I am too late to do any good with her. If she does not know it, it would be cruel and useless to reveal it to her."

What could he do? To see Mabel herself was out of the question. In the first place, the subject was one on which he felt it would be almost impossible for him to speak to her; and, in the next place, he was firmly resolved, with all the force of his manhood, not to be tempted by the sight of her into any present renewal of his suit. He had promised to be her friend, and he would be so. But, although he could act on her behalf as a loving brother might do, he knew that he could not so master himself in her presence as to speak to her face to face with weight or calmness. What could he do? What could he do? He sat motionless at his desk, with his eyes so riveted on Mr. Jones's letter, that the confidential clerk, who presently opened the door of the private room,

inly wondered what important communication it might be that Mr. Clement was poring on so intently.

"What is it, Stephens?" asked Clement, looking up with a start.

"I beg pardon, Mr. Clement; isn't the governor here?"

"No: my father is gone into the country for the day. Do you want him?"

"Why, yes; I did want him. But, perhaps, you can tell me, sir, how is it settled about sending some one to see the chief engineer about the extension of the Dublin and Ballyhacket branch line to Dunscothy? Mr. Charlewood said that some confidential person must run across for a couple of days and see how the thing looks. There's nobody fit for it but myself, and I really don't see how I *can* manage it just now."

Stephens was a trusted and influential personage, and his word went for a good deal in the doings of Gandry and Charlewood.

Clement looked vacantly at him for a moment, and then, suddenly jumping up, exclaimed: "It's all right, Stephens; I'll go myself."

"Will you, sir?" said Stephens, with an unmistakable look of relief. It was no unprecedented thing for young Charlewood to undertake similar missions. "But," added the clerk, doubtfully, "it'll have to be done at once, sir, whoever goes."

"I will start this evening. I shall get the night mail to Holyhead, and be in Dublin to-morrow."

"That'll be famous, Mr. Clement. I'll telegraph to the chief engineer to say you'll meet him yourself."

"All right, Stephens. And be good enough to have a hansom sent for at once. I shall barely have time to put a few things into my portmanteau and drive down to the station before the express goes."

"You don't let the grass grow under *your* feet, Mr. Clem," said the old clerk, approvingly, as he left the room.

"Yes, yes: that is my best course, and best chance," said Clement to himself. "I will see this old lady, and ascertain the real grounds she has for her supposition regarding Mabel. Miss O'Brien speaks highly of her kind heart. She will pardon me when I confide to her the terrible danger that threatens my—my dear friend. At all events, I cannot sit here inactive. Something I must do, or I should go mad."

The spruce hansom—and in Hammerham the hansom cabs are peculiarly spruce—rattled up to the door, and Clement jumped briskly in.

"Oh, by-the-by, Stephens," he called out, as he shut the folding-doors of the vehicle, "just tell my father, will you, that I—I haven't had time to answer Mr. Jones's letter after all."

CHAPTER XII. LADY POPHAM AT HOME.

THE afternoon sun was already low, and was glancing brightly between the massive tree-boles, and shedding a soft green light through the

leaves, when Clement Charlewood drove rapidly up the main avenue leading to Cloncoolin. His equipage was of a most nondescript kind. The vehicle was an outside car, the cushions of which were covered with very ragged and faded blue cloth, and the whole machine showed a long and complete estrangement from mop or brush. It was drawn by a tall, bony, shambling, ill-groomed quadruped, whose harness—which had seen better days—was eked out by ends of old rope and rusty iron buckles. The driver was a little, round-shouldered, bow-legged, talkative old man, whose costume was of an equally incongruous character with the rest of the turnout. He wore fawn-coloured breeches and gaiters, like those of a gentleman's groom, but had no waistcoat over his clean ragged shirt, and his outer garment was a heavy coachman's livery coat with tarnished buttons, and so preposterously too big for him that he had been obliged to turn the cuffs of the sleeves half way up his arms, in order to handle his reins. His wizened face, ugly, cunning, and mobile as that of some peculiarly vivacious old monkey—to which animal, indeed, he bore a strong resemblance—was surmounted by a desperately shabby and battered sugar-loaf hat, in the band of which was stuck a well-blackened dudeen.

This personage was the head ostler of the chief inn at Kilclare, and the outside car and the shambling horse equally belonged to that establishment. Clement had come from Ballyhackett by the stage-coach, and, on alighting at the inn, had asked for a vehicle to take him to Lady Popham's house with as little delay as might be.

When, some three-quarters of an hour after the appointed time, the "kyar" was announced as being in readiness, and Clement descended to the inn-yard, he stood aghast at the spectacle of the carriage, horse, and driver, that were to convey him to Lady Popham's mansion.

"Do you mean me to go upon that thing?" said he, pointing to it in dismay.

A chorus of stable-helpers, chambermaid, cook, waiter, and ragged urchins was in attendance, and joined in a voluble assurance that that, and no other, was the vehicle destined to have the honour of conveying his "lordship" to Cloncoolin.

"I—I'm afraid they won't let us in at the lodge gate," said Clement, staring ruefully at the ramshackle old machine, and speaking out with true Hammerham bluntness the thought that was in him.

"Divil doubt 'em," cried Tim Molloney, adjusting his preposterous coat-cuffs, and twinkling his keen monkey-like eyes with a sparkle of indignation. Loud and unanimous support for Tim Molloney from the chorus. "Sorra a fear of that, at all, at all," pursued Tim, from his place on the car.

"Is it my lady's lodge-keepers that 'ud be after refusing to let Mr. Donovan's kyar into Cloncoolin?"

The chorus loftily contemptuous of so wild a supposition.

"Sure don't they all know me, every mother's son of them, these fifteen years?"

The chorus ready to make oath—and making it—that every human being in Lady Popham's employ loved Tim Molloney like a brother.

"And haven't I driv lashins of the quality, the rale ould quality" (with an emphasis sufficient to point the application of the phrase to Clement's disadvantage), "to Cloncoolin be-
hoind Brian Boroo?"

Final and overwhelming burst of enthusiasm on the part of the chorus, in the midst of which Clement jumped into the car, and was driven off with much ungainly shambling and clattering of hoofs on the part of Brian Boroo, and loud crackings of Tim Molloney's whip.

The old ostler triumphantly made good his boast as to the certainty of his admission within the park gates of Cloncoolin, and exchanged familiar greetings with the lodge-keeper and his wife.

As Brian Boroo, being incited to put forth his mettle, dashed up the avenue at a pace which threatened to dislocate the crazy old vehicle altogether, Clement's heart sank a little at the idea of the enterprise he was engaged in.

"I am afraid this lady will consider me guilty of taking a great liberty," thought he; and Clement, in his shyness, shrank from the prospect of the coming interview. But, after all, what did it matter? If he could only ascertain the truth respecting Mabel, and be the means of averting misery and ruin from her, it signified very little what Lady Popham's opinion of him might be.

The footman, in answer to Clement's inquiries, said that her ladyship was at home, but that he could not affirm positively that she was disengaged; if the gentleman would be kind enough to send in his name, he would ascertain if her ladyship could receive him.

"Your mistress does not know me personally," said Clement, "but take my card to her, and say with my best compliments, that I have come some distance expressly to see her, that my time here is limited, and that I should esteem it a great favour if she would grant me an interview to-day."

The servant showed Clement across a spacious hall, covered with large richly framed oil paintings—most of them very coarsely executed—and into a small room on the ground floor, where he begged him to wait whilst he delivered the message.

There were drawings on the walls here, too, of no higher merit than the paintings in the hall, and over the chimney-piece hung a large portrait representing a handsome but effeminate looking man, dressed in the costume of the days of the Regency.

In a few minutes the servant returned very hurriedly.

"My lady's compliments, sir," said he, "and will you please to walk up-stairs directly?"

The man led the way up a noble old oak staircase, black and shiny as ebony, then through a long suite of shady rooms, rich with satin, velvet, and gilding, until they came to a small

octagonal apartment fitted up as a lady's boudoir; and here, in one corner of a wide couch, sat a tiny old woman, clad in long rustling robes of violet silk, and with a gorgeous cobweb of antique lace hanging from the back of her jet-black wig.

On Clement's entrance, the tiny old woman sprang off the couch with unexpected alacrity, and, clasping her hands, cried in a high, shrill voice, "For God's sake don't *prepare* me!"

Clement stood stock-still in dumb surprise.

"Don't *prepare* me!" repeated her ladyship, in great agitation. "There's nothing so dreadful as being prepared in that way. If anything terrible has happened, out with it at once."

"I assure you, on my honour," said Clement, earnestly, and still very much bewildered, "that nothing terrible has happened, and that you have no cause for apprehension."

Lady Popham fell back on the sofa with her handkerchief to her eyes.

"I made up my mind that you had come to tell me Geraldine was dead," she whimpered.

"I am shocked beyond measure to have alarmed you thus," said Clement. But in his heart he was considerably relieved by this explanation of the little old lady's extraordinary behaviour, for he had at the first moment entertained considerable doubts of her sanity.

"I came prepared to offer many apologies for my intrusion, Lady Popham," he said, "but I never thought of the possibility of your being so startled by my arrival."

"Of course not," said Lady Popham, wiping her eyes, and smiling quite cheerfully. "You couldn't be expected to know what an excitable fluttering creature I am. Always was from a child. An aspen-leaf, moved with a breath. They used to call me an April sky at home. Clouds and sunshine, smiles and tears. There isn't an ounce of your terrible British sang froid in my composition. But I really beg your pardon, Mr. Charlewood. Luke, place a chair for Mr. Charlewood, and go away, and don't let me hear the creak of your shoes in the corridor."

When the servant had left the room, her ladyship raised her eye-glass and surveyed Clement steadily for a few seconds, and then—apparently well satisfied with the result of her inspection—skipped up to him with the queerest little mincing gait imaginable, and holding out her lean, withered, white little hand, all a-blaze with diamonds, shook his heartily.

"Welcome to Cloncoolin, Mr. Clement Charlewood," said she, and made him a low sweeping curtsey.

"I hope you will pardon the liberty I have taken, Lady Popham—"

"Liberty? Not at all. Since my dear Geraldine's first cousin is going to marry a member of your family—"

"My sister."

"Your sister? Really! Well then, you see, you and I are almost relations, ain't we?"

"Your ladyship is very good, but—"

"But? Now that 'but' is very uncivil. Surely you won't refuse to call cousins with me? But perhaps you'd have no objection to allow Geraldine's claim, though you don't want an old woman like me for a cousin. Aha, Mr. Clement!" And the old lady nodded and showed her double range of false teeth with surprising archness.

At another time Clement might perhaps have been amused by her ladyship's oddities. But his heart was now too full of anxiety and apprehension to allow him to think of anything but the one object of his visit. Lady Popham having quite recovered from her fright, and being assured of Miss O'Brien's perfect health and safety, became so brisk and vivacious, and chatted away so incessantly, that Clement began to fear the time would slip by and the interview come to an end before he could approach the subject on which he desired to speak. Lady Popham asked if he were fond of pictures, and without waiting for a reply, began an extravagant eulogy on some in her own possession, the work of an unappreciated genius, whom she had patronised in Naples, but whom the world had steadily refused to crown as the modern Titian. Then she proceeded to speak of sculpture, and insisted on taking Clement into the great drawing-room, to show him a marble bust of her late husband, executed by another of her artistic protégés, and which she pronounced to be a marvellous likeness. "You saw Sir Bernard's portrait in the little blue room down-stairs?" said Lady Popham. "That was taken many years previous to this. And, do you know, Mr. Charlewood, what I have had done? The fashion of wearing moustaches was not so general when Sir Bernard was living, as it has become since. Now I adore moustaches. So manly, so distinguishing, and I *know* they would have been most becoming to him. So about two years before I left Italy, I made them put on a pair of moustaches—cleverly done in plaster—to this bust, and there they are, as you see. The effect is very good, I think."

Whatever might have been thought of the effect, the fact was undoubted. There were the luxuriant plaster moustaches, affixed to the upper lip of the marble face. And her ladyship stood contemplating the bust with perfect satisfaction and approval.

Clement was on thorns, as the eccentric little woman skipped and rustled about the room, pointing out this and that chef-d'œuvre of art, and talking incessantly.

At last, being reduced almost to desperation, he stopped her in the full flow of her discourse, and representing that his time at Kilclare was necessarily limited, begged that she would do him the favour of allowing him to speak on the business which had brought him to Cloncoolin.

Lady Popham immediately assumed an attentive face, and seating herself once more on the couch in her boudoir, desired him to speak.

"It is difficult, Lady Popham, because I feel that I have no right to trouble you on the subject. But I must crave your indulgence, and

ask you to accept my strong anxiety on this matter as some excuse."

Lady Popham waved her hand with a courteous gesture, implying that no excuse was needed. And Clement went on rapidly.

"The day before yesterday Miss O'Brien received a letter from your ladyship."

"No doubt she did. I wrote her a long letter, after having neglected her for some time."

"A portion of that letter Miss O'Brien read aloud at our luncheon-table."

A faint colour—called up, perhaps, by some recollection of the "bricks-and-mortar people," and sundry similar phrases—flushed Lady Popham's withered cheek. But she said nothing, and merely eyed Clement curiously.

"Amongst other matters, mention was made of a very dear friend of mine. One whose welfare I am bound to care for, as far as I am able. And the mention of that friend was such as to distress me a good deal."

"Really? I am very sorry," murmured Lady Popham, looking steadily at Clement through her glass.

"From all I have heard of you from your god-daughter, Lady Popham, I was emboldened to hope that under the circumstances of the case, you would overlook the conventional impropriety of my taking the step I have taken, and coming to speak to you in person."

Her ladyship nodded approvingly. "I'm very glad," she said, "that Geraldine knows me so well."

"To be brief, then," continued Clement, "you have shown some kindness to a young violinist named Alfred Trescott——"

"Alfred Trescott?" said the little woman, jumping up and clapping her hands enthusiastically. "Oh, he is the divinest creature! And has a genius for music, comme il y en a peu. And is he really a dear friend of yours? I am so charmed! But what could possibly have distressed you in my mention of him?"

"No, no," said Clement, almost savagely, "he is no friend of mine, Lady Popham. And, in truth, I have no reason to think well of him in any way. But you spoke also of a young a—a—actress."

He brought out the word with a jerk, and as if its utterance were painful to him.

"Oh, to be sure, Miss Bell. She went to Dublin a fortnight ago at the close of the season. A very charming, interesting girl. Is *she* your very dear friend, Mr. Charlewood?"

Clement coloured deeply, but answered at once, in a firm voice: "Yes, Lady Popham, that young lady, whom you call Miss Bell, is a very dear and valued friend of mine. I know and esteem her mother—who is, I assure you, an excellent person, and a thorough gentlewoman—and I have been placed by—by circumstances in a position with regard to them both, that warrants my asking you in confidence if there is any solid foundation for the insinuation you jestingly threw out with regard to Mr. Alfred Trescott and—this young lady."

"Now, really, really, my dear Mr. Charlewood," said her ladyship, tapping his arm playfully with the handle of a large green fan that lay beside her, "I begin to be afraid that you have some intention of troubling that course of true love which is said never yet to have run smooth!"

"Good Heavens! Lady Popham, you don't mean to say——"

"Oh, Dio guardi! I don't mean to say anything about the lady—that is to say, I have no right to do so. None in the world. But, I dare say, my young Orpheus—who is positively enchanting—wouldn't mind my admitting on his part that he is over head and ears in love with Miss Bell. And small blame to him, as they say here."

"But she—you don't believe for a moment that she thinks of him?"

Clement's forehead was knotted into an expression of intense suffering, and he was evidently struggling hard to master some violent emotion.

But Lady Popham, who thoroughly enjoyed the romance she had conjured up, went on rapturously to praise Miss Bell's beauty, and talent, and grace, and Alfred Trescott's picturesque appearance and musical genius, and to exclaim sentimentally what a charming couple they would make, until Clement was nearly beside himself.

"Lady Popham," he cried, desperately, "if you could only know, as I do, the real character of this young man, you would shrink with horror from the idea of encouraging such an alliance for one moment."

"I beg you to understand, Mr. Clement Charlewood," said the old lady, drawing herself up, "that you are very much mistaken when you do me the honour to suppose that I have been instrumental in 'encouraging,' as you call it, anything of the kind."

"I sincerely beg your pardon if I have said anything offensive, but this matter touches me so nearly that I cannot stay to choose my words. I tell you, Lady Popham, that this young Trescott is selfish, idle, unprincipled, and a gambler. His associates and his habits are low, and vile, and vulgar. A union between such a fellow as I know this young man to be, and the lady we are speaking of, would be in every respect a wretched and most ill-assorted union."

Lady Popham tapped her foot impatiently on the ground. She was terribly annoyed. Her ladyship had been so long accustomed to give free scope to all her whims and fancies, and had plunged headlong into so violent an infatuation for her new protégé—boasting of his talents to all her acquaintance—that to be told in this rough blunt way that the young man whom she had admired and petted and received into her house was "low, and vile, and vulgar," was quite intolerable.

"Really, Mr. Charlewood," she said, sharply, "you are making very serious and disgraceful accusations against my young friend. You know best what your motive may be for so

doing, but at least you should be prepared to find them received with some degree of—of hesitation, at all events.”

Clement started as if he had been struck. Secure in the honesty of his own purpose, and in his knowledge of Alfred Trescott's character, it had never occurred to him that any one could possibly doubt either.

“Lady Popham,” he began, greatly agitated, “if I could only explain to you—”

“Besides which,” went on the old lady, heedless of his interruption, “besides which, it appears to me that all this fuss on your part is highly unnecessary. The young lady has, you tell me, a mother in every way qualified to take care of her; and she is at present under the guardianship of her aunt, a woman, as every one here will tell you, of irreproachable character.”

“Thank God for that!” murmured poor Clement.

“In short, there is but one circumstance which, in my opinion, could justify your conduct. If you tell me that you yourself are engaged to Miss Bell—”

“I am not engaged to her,” answered Clement, in a low voice.

“Then you must excuse me for saying that I do not recognise your right to interfere.”

Clement arose with a deep sigh and stood before her. “If I could have known beforehand, Lady Popham,” said he, with an unaffected simplicity of sorrow which the old gentlewoman's ear was of sufficiently fine fibre to appreciate, “if I could but have known how worse than useless my visit would prove, owing partly to my own want of tact and grace, you would have been spared this intrusion, and I, some mortification and disappointment.”

The impulsive little woman, whose moods were as uncontrolled and vehement as those of a child, and but little more deep and lasting, sprang to her feet and seized his hand.

“Now, my dear Mr. Charlewood,” said she, “don't think of going in this way. Don't, I beg of you. Do me the great favour and honour to remain here to dinner, and let me send to Kilclare for your portmanteau, and stay at Cloncoolin to-night. Geraldine will never forgive me if she thinks I have shown any want of hospitality to a member of your family, under whose roof, she tells me, she is spending such pleasant days. You see I am pleading quite selfishly.” And Lady Popham bent her head, and looked up at him out of her bright sunken eyes with a little coquettish glance that seemed to conjure up the pale ghost of her forgotten girlhood.

Clement's feelings, however, were neither so fleeting nor so superficial as her eccentric ladyship, and he had got a wound which his pride and his love alike impelled him to bear in silence. He therefore excused himself with what grace he could, but with a fixed determination against which Lady Popham's flattering eager words beat their light wings in vain.

As he drove down the avenue again, now

barred with long blue shadows and golden ingots of yellow evening sunshine, a gentleman with two magnificent Irish setters at his heels sauntered slowly by him towards the house.

“I should know that face, surely,” thought Clement, feeling conscious at the same time that the said face had no pleasant associations connected with it in his mind.

“Who is that gentleman?” he asked of the driver. “Do you know him?”

“Is it the captain?” said Tim Molloney, contemptuously; for he had not quite forgiven the Englishman's doubt as to Mr. Donovan's “kyar” being admitted into Cloncoolin. “Do I know the captain? Faith, an' I do that same. Sure he's my lady's great-nephew. Her brother's daughter's second son. The Honourable Arthur Skidley, no less, on lave from Dublin, an' a foine high-spirited affable gentleman he is.”

“Arthur Skidley?”

“The Honourable Arthur Skidley,” repeated Tim. “Does your honour know him?”

“No,” said Clement, brusquely.

“Oh!” ejaculated Tim; and plying his whip smartly, he started Brian Boroo at a pace that brought them clattering and shambling into Kilclare before sunset.

“O Mabel,” thought Clement, looking out from the window of the poor inn upon the blue line of mountains wherein the silver Clare had its source, and behind which the great fire of sunset was slowly dying, “Mabel, Mabel, the hope of my life is fading, even as the redness fades out of the sky, and its last gleam only serves to show me what I lose, and to make the coming night more blank and cheerless.”

OLD AND NEW SERVANTS.

As we walk straight on down the great Valley of the Shadow, and moisten our crust with bitter tears, there are certain agents appointed to attend on us in our progress, apparently to smoothe our path. Happy Eden, where our first parents waited on themselves! With the fall came sin, and death—and servants—into the world. Happy the Otaheitan and other savages; *they* can accomplish their simple round of duties without menial aid. Even their prisoners they do not make slaves, as we might reasonably suppose; they eat them. If they would, indeed, do that kindly office in the instance of “Jeames” and “Chawles!”

The thing has been too much overdone. Luxury and civilisation have taught us to multiply the necessary aids, which we foolishly imagine are indispensable. Napoleon sums it all up, as he happily summed up so many things, in almost an epigram. “The hereditary Hapsburgs may be shaved by others; one who is the Rodolph of his family shaves himself.” That is to say, effeminacy and luxury are weakly dependent on the services of others, not in shaving merely; but your fresh, independent, healthy hero serves himself. It could scarcely be in-

sisted on that servants should be wholly abolished; but reform is sadly wanting.

Not being the scion of a lordly house, nor indeed a scion that was nursed in what is called "the lap of luxury," albeit a decent and even opulent sufficiency was never wanting, fate happily ordained that we should not be waited on by the dreadful familiars, who seem to be all prolonged calves and clouds of powder. Their dreadful offices were never needed. No one can guess what is in store for us before we die, or what dazzling service may entitle us to receive a coronet at the hands of our sovereign. Yet as such distinction entails the dreadful offices of those attendants, it would seem to embitter that laudable triumph. Those long and languid men, flabby in texture, would appear to take the function of the slave on the car of the Roman general. Their terrible equanimity and monotonous whiteness appal. In that remote contingency of the coronet just alluded to, lordly state should be kept altogether without *their* assistance. They would embitter the revels, and on any occasions of state the aid of hired professionals would more than suffice.

Wandering round the more noble squares, we catch glimpses through hall windows and open hall doors of these splendid but costly figures. They seem to us outsiders about as ornamental as the Dresden on my lady's chimney-piece. They lean languidly and converse with each other, their calves crossed something after the manner of the supporting limbs of a camp-stool. Sometimes they may borrow, unwittingly, from Cruikshank, and ask one another in easy innocence, "What is taxes, Thomas?" Wonderful aristocrats! We serve them, not they us. Their manner and air, if imported into the classes above, would be the perfection of refined hauteur and accomplished languor. About the door of one of our great mansions in one of our grander squares, an "afternoon tea," or what is called a kettle-drum, was lately going on. The carriages were drawn up in crowds in a pleasant yet harmonious disorder, en échelon, to use the military phrase. A whole group of the gentlemen, who sat behind, were gathered round the door, talking in an easy way, as if on the steps of their club. They were rallying, I think, a very handsome gentleman, certainly over six feet high, on the natural penchant which they insisted was entertained for him in a very exalted quarter. These compliments he accepted with an air of high-bred good humour, and without a shade of vexation. I thought I could distinguish in the group the regular traces of circles above them; but, indeed, these things only repeat themselves. I thought I saw the heavy political man, the old stager, who knows the world, had been "fast" in his youth, and seen service—that is, many services; also the young airy gallant, fresh upon town and delighted with everything, and whose handling of his cane betrayed a little inexperience, and the funny jovial fellow, who had a fund of humour. At

times a loud and hearty burst of laughter, as if in a club window, attested his powers. Then came a bit of nature. Up drove a brougham, clearly an hired one, and hired from an obscure professor. Its footman got down, and was looking for a house. This ignorance was raw enough, and, indeed, a glimpse at the tenants showed something in the country-cousin way. But the servant—their servant! He was a mere country lad, put into a livery made by a country-town tailor, with a country-town hat, white cotton gloves a world too wide and too long for his fingers. But, apart from these accidents, the air of the fellow betrayed him; he scented of the plough. He passed by looking at the numbers wildly, and then went back to his employers. They pointed to the group of gentlemen who were conversing, and presently, a little nervous all the time, he came up to them and asked for information. The laugh was suspended. The seven or eight gentlemen all looked down at this grotesque belonging to their order, for he was very short, and his coat-tails stuck in a really comic way. One of them answered his question with perfect politeness, not without sarcasm, that "This was the ouse jest be'ind 'im." But as the provincial novice moved away, elate with his information, the seven or eight faces looked after him in intense enjoyment, the young elegant simpered, the humorist made a joke; there was a galaxy of smiles, but, mark, nothing to exceed the laws of propriety. They could not but enjoy it. But a richer treat remained; when the ancient brougham drew up, and the provincial half-page, half-footman—for he hovered on the boundary between—helped out his ladies tenderly, the gentlemen drew aside with the air of high-bred men, yet with a look of amused curiosity and superciliousness that was charming. One assumed a sickly smile, and made his eye blink, carrying out the fiction of an eye-glass. Yet it must be understood distinctly that as the country-town ladies passed in, in their country-town finery of a passé pattern, there was nothing to trench on the laws of good breeding, save, indeed, in the behaviour of one gentleman in the rear, and covered, so to speak, by his fellows, who threw back his powdered head and gave a stamp on the pavement in a sort of silent spasm of laughter. The humorist of the circle was very pleasant on the whole scene, though in a low and suppressed voice, as became an assembly of gentlemen.

But it is in what are called "great houses" that we feel awe-stricken by these gentry. We are invited on a visit to the Most Noble the Marquis of Frendlesham, and find a tall white being, whose address and calmness, whose placid stare, make us feel uncomfortable, "told off" specially to look after our happiness. His name is perhaps "Charles." In vain do we reassure ourselves that this is only some "common fellow," a mere footman, certainly of inferior clay; for still the result is uncomfortable. Why not have human beings to wait at these august places, not icicles or rods? We

know very well what goes on below; for our wife brings her maid, who is on a visit too, and made welcome to the greater community downstairs. The place seems to swarm with the ladies and gentlemen that attend on other ladies and gentlemen. The strictest division is enforced. Our lady's-maid, as a *guest*, is welcomed in the housekeeper's room, and sits with Mr. Cook, the butler, Mrs. Colley, the housekeeper, Jackson, the groom of the chambers, and Mr. Jones, the steward. Here more elegant manners prevail. But afar off our maid hears the pleasant laughter in the "servants' 'all," the more unrestrained revels, where "Jeames" and "Chawles" are giving way to their natural spirits as men of the world, who know town life, convulsing the rustics present by their delineation of London life and manners. To be a "gentleman" on a visit at one of these great houses must be a great treat, and a welcome change. My lord's valet has nothing but the mere valet duties, in reference to my lord's clothes and hot water; the rest of his time is for himself. The noble person who entertains takes care, for the sake of his own credit, that the entertainment in the way of eating and drinking shall be on a fitting scale of liberality. My lord's valet, who is a fair and rather sickly young man wearing beautiful linen and a gold chain, is much admired by the rosy and buxom ladies who look at him from afar off, from the scullery say, but dare not approach nearer. Of a morning we often see him through the trees taking a pensive walk, really as regards dress (he has a shooting-coat of my lord's on) not to be distinguished from my lord himself. But he is not much favoured by the other gentlemen, who say he is "dayvilish fine." Who that loves human character would not take any reasonable step, save, of course, unworthy listening at keyholes, &c., to look on at this strange world down-stairs? It would be the most entertaining mirth-moving pastime. There is an admirable farce, full of humour, the credit of which a clergyman-schoolmaster assumed, but which really came from DAVID GARRICK, that deals with this under-side of life, and which has been too much neglected of late years. Who has not laughed with a genuine enjoyment at *High Life Below Stairs*, and the quarrel of My Lord Duke and Sir Harry about their respective pretensions to "Lady Bab"? The chord of true humour is touched here, and finds an echo in Reality, the *real* source of genuine laughter. Not as now, when some poor accident, which is merely absurd and not humorous, some wretched twist of mouth or catchword, is made the basis of a farce. The point in *High Life Below Stairs* is to be found in our nature, and the play will be understood and relished a hundred years hence.

In a community of this sort, where the menial offices devolve on guests as well as hosts (we are still on that lower level), there sometimes will arise serious causes of quarrel. High words arise, not so much between Jeames and Chawles,

as between Chawles and Miss Cotter, Lady Harriet's own maid. This arises naturally out of a division of duties only imperfectly settled; and the guest betimes, as he lies in bed, has heard an angry conflict on the stairs, alternating with sarcasm and strong personality, together with a sound as of ladies' boots being flung down, with an "It ain't my dooty; I ain't a-going to wait on *your* Lady Har-yet," with a prompt retort, "Pick 'em up, you leow fellah you!" But in the evenings in the 'all, everything is smoothed away, and Chawles forgets the past like a true gentleman and man of the world as he is, who scorns to war with the softer sex.

Perhaps the next entertaining and satisfactory of all the lower professions, the most variegated and exciting, must be that of a "waiter" in elegant practice. It is surprising it is not overstocked. There are many of our sons and brothers in what *they* consider promising practice at the bar, and making not nearly so much in fees, and they never enjoy perquisites. I speak, of course, of a waiter with a good connexion, who is on terms of friendship with the leading cooks and confectioners, and who is known to have a light charming touch, and so much respect for the dignity of his order as to take but a moderate tithe out of what is going. There are plenty of your rude coarse hands, whose very air and bearing are an offence. In all professions there are the bunglers; the heavy men, who miss the opportunity often offered, and which does not again present itself.

It is surprising how much depends on this "tact," as it may be called. How often has the first brief set the briefless on his road to fame and fortune! Erskine, when so called on in an emergency, felt, he said, his little ones at home tugging at his gown. And often the stray waiter, obscure, unknown, "had in" on the pressure of the moment, simply and wholly because there was none else to be had, this artist—to speak by the card—has so thoroughly identified himself with the part, thrown himself with such good humour and zeal in the desperation of the crisis supplying the place of the absent, being here, there, and everywhere, that he at once attracted the favour of all present; and A. B. (he would not like me to name him), whom we now feel hovering behind us at my lord duke's, nay, even at yet higher jinks, without whom no decent solemnity is complete, who has a clerk to keep his book and take his fees (as in the *other* profession), traces it all to this humble beginning. But I think it was the occasion, not the cause. His preferment must have come. But, it may be repeated, of all the less exalted professions, which entail what is called the sweat of the brow, waiting is the most enticing. Waiters see the best and the most intellectual: they hold conversations with the noblest and most gifted in the land—with the premier, the primate, the lord mayor, the poet, the novelist, the orator: they converse in easy fashion on the peripatetic questions as to the

choice of wine, whether port, sherry, claret, or madeira—and the reply surely amounts to a conversation? What glittering scenes of splendour they are admitted to! What ravishing beauty they may look on! They, indeed, go out to balls, dinners, and parties, as much as the most fashionable. No wonder that everything else—trade, labour, and even that final haven of public-house proprietorship—should be more or less insipid. By a little fiction they may hold themselves as much invited as the guests. And, let it be added, that, without impeachment of guilt, there are certain tithings, in the way of meats and drinks of the choicest sort, to which they are fairly entitled, provided they be taken with delicacy and moderation. There are remnants and surplusages which no host can grudge them, possibly, because there can be no restraint of any practical value. But his must be a low coarse mind that can bring disgrace upon his order by flagrant and helpless intoxication. The emoluments, too, are certainly opulent, not to say luxurious. Many a gentleman that is in good practice receives several retainers for the one night, and with good hands such divided service has its value. Money is put by; and after very few years the cherished goal is reached, and the longed-for “public” opened. This, the longed-for Bar, is what the Bench would be for a member of the other profession.

In contrast to occasional and transient service, who does not know the family treasure, the pearl of price, the faithful retainer, who has been in the family, “man and boy, nigh forty year”—in short, the old servant? Such come very dramatically on the stage; there they are accustomed at seasons of family pressure to bring out their “little hoards,” their life’s savings, and with a “It ain’t much, miss, but, such as it is, you are welcome to it,” press their assistance on the young daughter of the family. This is the theatrical view: but some of these ancient retainers have their inconveniences. They are the true old men of the sea—never to be parted with save under conditions of a handsome pension, whose amount is an indignity and cause of injury. Their redeeming merit is a strict honesty; they will not wrong you in what they call “a pin’s point.” But they are more passive where others are concerned. They think something is due to the credit of the house, and rather stand up for all impositions. They keep us in a decent bondage, the ladies in a sort of terrorism; and grave consultations have to be held, and mutual support conceded, before “John” or “William” can be asked to go out on some message, or worse, have the news broken to him that Mr. and Mrs. Brown are coming to dinner. Dinners, teas, messages, are all so many synonyms for trouble. The face of the ancient retainer, as he opens the hall door to admit some new modern “notion”—say a fern case, carried in by two men—is worth studying, bearing an expression compounded of disgust, wonder, contempt, and anger. He looks after the object with a mut-

tered “Well, well! after *that*! Now *this* ends it!” As for the “Rooshian” system as applied to dinners, *that* “goes beyond the beyonds.” In his eyes, it is next to sitting down like the savages, and pulling the meat with our fingers. The idea of a dinner that is no dinner, a table with nothing to eat upon it! That in its own way *was* going beyond the beyonds. But when the retainer gets sick and is prostrated and near his end, as he, but no one else, thinks; when he moans and crones over himself, and more than hints in faltering accents that it is the overwork of the cruel family who have brought him to this sore pass, but whom he forgives, with a “No matter *now*,” dating it all from the night of the party, when all that weary, “weary work” was laid on his back. Everything is on his back. It is we who are in the service of these “treasures,” not they in ours.

They do not consider, too, how often they bring us to shame by their free-and-easy bearing, their volunteer conversations at the hall door. With persons of condition and acute observation they talk on perfect equality. It was an old Irish retainer who was on duty in the hall of, of course, an Irish family, on the night of a party, and called after some of the company who were going in a wrong direction to take off their cloaks, &c.: “Come back, will ye! Come back, I say. *It’s in here ye’s to sthrup.*” And yet, take them for all in all, with all their failings and blemishes, and the slavery into which they sell us—still after a line of monsters, who drink and steal, or are impudent, or quarrelsome, or idle, the eye looks back wistfully to the honest imperfections of the “old retainer.” Between them both there is not much to choose. Yet the absence of vices is a recommendation.

Still it is always good to see masters and servants grow old together; even better to see hereditary service kept up—where there is a lineage of service in the servants’ halls as well as a lineage recorded in Burke, where the son of the late Sir John’s old butler ministers to Sir John’s successor. It is in such houses that every kind of menial office is best performed. Such families have their systems and traditions, in which there are traditions of service that cause every new servant, when new servants are required, to fall into the ways of the house—ways of too old growth, and too firmly established, to be lightly thrown out of order. To govern a large establishment well requires an education, just as much as teaching and training are required to make efficient servants.

A good servant is a pearl of great price, and yet, somehow, there are few who would like to have Mr. Joseph Andrews for their footman. The notion of a pious man-servant is, somehow, offensive, possibly from a suspicion of insincerity, though this seems a rather harsh idea. A more reasonable explanation is the perpetual reminder of our own inferiority to one, who *should* be inferior in all things, even in piety. We have a sneaking preference for the man who had no objection to attend family prayer, but hoped,

it would be considered in the wages; there was a frankness in this declaration which commended itself at once. Here we were superior. We could reason—drop the word—and bring him back to right courses. But with Mr. Joseph Andrews it is different: be he ever so respectful or so modest in his piety, we do not like it. But this is opening a chapter in human nature; for perhaps we do not like “superior piety” in others, even in our equals.

What does all this point to? Whither are we to turn? There must be relief somewhere. The evil is beginning to excite the consideration of thoughtful men.

It is, indeed, a judgment on our vanity. To gratify the wretched pomp of having what Mr. Justice Blackstone calls one of “the worthier blood” to open our door when Mr. Jones calls, we suffer acutely at home, and lay down our unresisting bodies to be driven over again and again by a vile Juggernaut butler or footman. Away with the nuisance, I say! The real remedy is not so far off. There is neat-handed Phyllis, trim—perhaps pretty—smart—light of touch, soft in walk, nimble, brisk, and, above all, willing. Her shoes do not creak like that set’s, whom we had to send away last week, having been roused, by a strong smell of burning, to go down pantry-wards, and having there found a lighted candle under a shelf, which was slowly “charring” away, while the wretch was lying on his bed with his clothes on, and a bottle of our best brandy beside him. She does not clatter among your silver at the sideboard, or take an hour getting round the table. In the value of her attendance she is worth two of the chartered brutes, especially to those who have no legitimate state to keep up. An attentive, quiet, ready, systematic male servitor at table is, however, invaluable, not only in himself, but as an example to the less accomplished understrappers, and where he is in his proper place, that is, with a master who can afford to keep him. Those who cannot, should be contented with and prize the neat-handed Phyllis. But, alas! how many struggle on with mongrel men-servants merely for the ostentation of the thing, and undergo endless domestic tortures for the vicarious display of crested buttons and bits of gold lace.

THE SIEGE OF SEVEN ACRES.

It is but dimly remembered, even by historians, that for several years after the revolution of 1688, seven acres of Great Britain withstood the naval and military forces of the rest of the realm, the besieged refusing allegiance to William and Mary, and heroically fighting under the defiant banner of James the Third.

This four years’ siege was maintained on the island of Bass, which lies near the mouth of the Forth, about two miles from the coast of East Lothian, and which is, in fact, a column of pure trap that rises perpendicularly out of the sea to the height of four hundred

feet, though it shelves, on the southern side, down to a cliff some ninety feet above the water-line, where are built a series of gloomy state prisons, surrounded by battlements embrasured for at least twenty pieces of cannon. The habitable surface of the rock comprises about seven acres. It is perforated by a cavern, fearfully dark in the centre, where, at times, the sea roars with astounding violence; yet, notwithstanding the terrors of its aspect, it is sometimes explored by the young fishermen. Around the island, the water averages two hundred feet in depth. After the Restoration, this place was used as a state prison, chiefly for troublesome political culprits—a species of Scottish Bastille for non-juring clergymen, of whom there were at one time nearly fifty secluded on the island rock, under a military guard. “The island of the Basse” (to quote *Magna Britannia Notitiæ*, 1709) “was an ancient possession of the family of Lauderdale, and in the reign of Charles the Second was bought and annexed to the crown. The garrison is commanded by an ensign, a sergeant, a corporal, and soldiers, whose pay is as follows:

| | s. | d. |
|--------------------------------|----|----|
| The ensign, per diem, is . . . | 4 | 0 |
| The sergeant | 2 | 0 |
| The corporal | 1 | 4 |

The soldiers are taken out of her Majesty’s regiment of Guards, and paid with an allowance of twopence sterling to each, which makes their pay ninepence per diem.”

In the spring of 1689, there were sent as prisoners to the Bass four young officers of King James’s army in the north—Lieutenants Michael Middleton and Halyburton, and Ensigns Roy and Dunbar, who had been captured by General Sir Thomas Livingstone, after the battle of Killycrankie.

Fiercy cavaliers of Dundee, boiling with hatred and scorn of their sour and stern but now triumphant captors—for civil, political, religious, and feudal rancour all seemed to inflame party spirit in those unhappy times—they commenced at once to plot for freedom; and such adventurous blades soon found an opportunity of turning the tables on their jailers—a party of the Scots Guards, under Lieutenant Wood.

Young and daring, the solitude and seclusion of that lonely little castle, washed by the sea, must soon have become intolerable to those gentlemen, who had only before them a hopeless captivity or a miserable death, and they boldly conceived an idea of capturing the place.

This scheme is said to have been first concerted in the house of Sir George Seton, of Garleton, near Drem, who was afterwards made a prisoner therefor, and it is also said to have been originally suggested by Captain Charles Maitland, the superseded deputy-governor for King James, who certainly had several meetings concerning the affair with two young cavaliers, David Blair (son of James Blair, of Ardblair), William Crawford, of Ardmillan, and some others, who had all lived for a time, disguised as

seamen, in the adjacent village of Athelstoneford.*

The four military prisoners in the Bass observed that when a boat came periodically with coals and provisions for the garrison, it was the custom for all the soldiers, except three, to descend to the landing-place at the plateau of rock, outside the walls, to assist in the unloading; and on the 15th of June, 1689, they availed themselves of this fortunate circumstance to seize upon arms and take the castle by surprise.

They simply rushed upon the gates, closed and secured them, and made themselves completely masters of the place, by threatening to fire both cannon and musketry upon the excluded soldiers, who were compelled, rather reluctantly and foolishly, to abandon the rock in the coal boat.

Of the garrison, the Jacobites retained only a sergeant round La Fosse, Swan the gunner, and a soldier on whom they could depend. They then discharged a cannon or two, and hoisted the standard of King James.

Next day they were joined by Captain Maitland, the late deputy-governor, and a few hours after by David Blair and William Crawford, usually styled Ardmillan. He was the eldest son of Crawford, of Baidland (who was also of Ardmillan, in right of his wife, who was a Kennedy), and he joined in this wild and rash affair, though on the point of marriage with a young girl possessed of great attractions—Margaret Kennedy, of Balderstone. He brought with him his servant and two Irish seamen, named Newport and Cornelius O'Brien, with whom he put off to the Bass on a dark night, seizing a long boat that lay upon the coast near Dirlton. The two Irishmen had just effected their escape from the Tolbooth of Leith, where they had been committed as spies of King James from Ireland.

So now those thirteen men prepared to set all Britain at defiance.

On hearing of their proceedings, and in fear of what they might lead to, the privy council at Edinburgh was greatly enraged, and placed Lieutenant Wood, the commander of the detachment (who had been amusing himself in the city), under arrest for neglect of duty, and a party of troops were stationed in the hamlet of Castleton, opposite the isle, to cut off all communication between it and the mainland. This party was soon after reinforced by another, under three officers, sent by Sir Thomas Livingstone, the commander-in-chief, the more effectually to blockade the Bass.

Many months elapsed, and that inaccessible fortress was watched in vain. Its little garrison derided all efforts to subdue them, and kept King James's flag flying in defiance of the Scottish government, leading a merry life the while among the clouds of white sea-birds which made the Bass their haunt, and they had no lack of stirring adventures by sea and land.

* Fletcher's Memorial, quoted by Crichton.

Anxious, perhaps, to see his mistress, young Ardmillan more than once went boldly to the mainland, and, in returning, brought off a good supply of provisions; but there were times when the weather was stormy, and the ocean rough, that made them fain to be content with the rank and rancid flesh of the solan geese,* dressed with the *laver*, or seaweed, that grows on the rocks.

To further the blockade, two small armed vessels were now ordered to cruise between the isle and the shore; but this was perilous work, as the walls were mounted with fourteen pieces of cannon.

A sergeant and drummer, bearing a flag of truce, were sent by the officer at Castleton to the holders of the Bass, who allowed them to land, and immediately disarmed and made them prisoners. A boat was then sent round to a part of the isle, beyond range of cannon-shot, to demand their release, and the surrender of the craft in which they had come. They were ultimately given up; but the boat was retained for the use of the garrison. Ignorant of what was passing, the skipper of a Danish galliot brought her within range of their guns. Though we were at peace with Christian the Fifth, she was compelled to shorten sail, and was sacked of all she contained. After this, in defiance of the exasperated council, the garrison—if it can be called such—by predatory boating expeditions in the long dark nights of autumn, "laid all the coast between the Tyne and Tay under contribution."†

The government were literally powerless.

The island was too far from the mainland to be bombarded in those days, when Lancaster guns and rifled cannon were unknown; and its cliff-built battlements were far above the range of any ship's artillery, while those of the castle were alike heavy and well supplied. The idea of assaulting the Bass was never conceived; but an attempt was made to cut off the two boats of the garrison—one a Norwegian skiff, which they drew up to the ramparts by means of a powerful crane (part of which is still lying there) beside a well loopholed tower; and the other, which belonged to Ardmillan, and was capable of containing twenty men; this they usually secured by drawing it up high and dry upon the plateau of rock, when it was alike protected by the cannon of the curtain wall and the loopholes of the spur; and there it lay safely till one dark night, when some bold fellows landed unseen at the plateau, launched it, and towed it away to the mainland.

This was a severe loss; but Middleton and

* These birds were protected by an act of the Legislature, which forbade the seamen and inhabitants of North Berwick, Dunbar, Fisher-row, and all others, to destroy them. Vide Ratification of an act of Secreit Counsaill in favour of Maister George Lauder, of the Bass. 1692.—Acta Parliamentorum Jacobi VI.

† Robert Chambers's Domestic Annals.

Ardmillan landed soon after near the ruins of Tantallan, promising to return in a fortnight, at latest, with supplies.

The two weeks expired, and several days more passed without their reappearing. The only boat was gone now, and the little band were beginning to lose courage, so Captain Maitland sent Ensign Dunbar to the officer at Castleton—after signalling for a boat—concerning a surrender.

But lo! while the arrangements were pending, a large barge under full sail, manned by Middleton, Ardmillan, and eight others, with a load of provisions, was seen bearing in between the land and the Bass, under the guns of which it ran in safety, before it could be intercepted. Hostilities were at once resumed, and poor Ensign Dunbar was detained as a prisoner.

Five days after this, a patrol contrived to seize the same boat, when quitting the isle in the night, and there were found in her four seamen, four women, Swan, the gunner, and the soldier who had been retained when the castle was surprised.

The garrison now numbered sixteen men. They had thirteen sheep, fifteen bolls of meal, two hundred-weight of biscuit, two barrels of butter, plenty of peas, salt, candles, coals, hard fish, salt beef, and a great hogshead of brandy, taken from the galliot. They had fourteen iron cannon, sixty stand of arms, ten casks of powder, plenty of small shot, and four hundred cannon-balls, most of which had been fired at the island.

This ammunition they stored in the little chapel, which is of great antiquity, though it was consecrated to St. Baldwin only so lately as 1542, by order of Cardinal Beaton, four years before his murder.

A whole year now passed away, and still these few resolute men defied all efforts to subdue them.

In March, 1692, the Admiralty sent orders to Captain Anthony Roofe, commander of the Sheerness, and to Captain Orton, of the London Merchant, both then lying in Leith roads, "to attack the Bass immediately, to do it what prejudice they could, by breaking the crew and boats, dismounting the cannon, and ruining the houses upon it."

In the naval lists for that year, the Sheerness appears to have been a fifth rate, mounting thirty guns, with one hundred and thirty men; but neither she nor her consort could achieve anything, and quite failed to prevent the garrison from doubling their store of powder, pillaging wheat and barley from several sloops going from Dunbar to Leith, carrying off all the coals from the pharos on the Isle of Moy, and seizing a large boat in the harbour of Dundee.

The Lion, commanded by Captain Edmond Burd, with a dogger of six guns; and a large armed pinnace of Kirkaldy, under a Captain Boswell, were now ordered to cruise off the island. The only king's ship then called the

Lion had fifty guns and a crew of two hundred and thirty men, and if Burd's vessel was the same, she failed to achieve much either; for the Scottish Jacobites in France had now heard of these affairs, and in August, 1693, they sent a French frigate, on the appearance of which in the Firth the Lion and her two Scottish consorts vanished, quietly allowing the stranger to lie to under the guns of the Bass with fresh supplies. In the same month, however, a privateer of Dunkirk, which came on the same errand, was attacked by the Lion and driven off the coast.

The most serious occurrence for the besieged was the arrest of a person named Trotter, who had supplied them with provisions. His execution was ordered to take place at the hamlet of Castleton, in view of the garrison; but while the gallows were being erected, a shot from the Bass is said to have broken up the assemblage. This, however, did not prevent the sacrifice being made elsewhere, according to the Domestic Annals; but why a shot should reach the mainland from the isle, and not vice versa, no reason is given.

The land blockade was conducted by Thomas Drury, chief of the Scottish engineers, who has left a very careful drawing of the island and its prisons, and whose name is still borne by an old battery, which he constructed on the south side of Edinburgh Castle. A heavy frigate and a large armed launch were now ordered to cruise constantly near the Bass to cut off all supplies. So the spring of 1694 saw the little garrison reduced to the verge of starvation, and growing weary of their secluded life and hopeless defence.

In April, Middleton, who acted now as captain of the fortress, made proposals to surrender. The articles were put into the hands of a Major Reid and other officers who were commissioned to treat with those remarkable offenders, who continued to the last to appear well off and in the highest spirits.

When the commissioners came to the Bass, Middleton gave them a hearty luncheon, with French wines and fine biscuits, inviting them to "eat freely, as there was no scarcity of provisions." On their departure, the little band gave them three cheers, and had the walls lined with old muskets and stuffed figures, with military hats and red coats on them, as if there had been a strong garrison.

The terms were, that the garrison should have their lives, liberties, and fortunes guaranteed, whether under sentence of death or not; that they were to march out with all their baggage, swords, and weapons "in their own boats," and to land where they pleased.

That all persons belonging to the Bass, whether in or out of prison, should have a ship, under Captain Formand, provided and provisioned for their transport to Dunkirk or Havre-de-Grace, and that those who cared not to go might remain in Scotland unmolested.

That they should have permission to sell all their fishing-nets, anchors, cables, and other

gear; and that the back pay or alimant of Lieutenants Middleton and Halyburton, and of Ensign Dunbar, should be *made good* by the government!

These ample and remarkable terms were signed by the whole privy council of Scotland then present, to wit, John, Marquis of Tweedale, high chancellor; George, Earl of Linlithgow; Archibald, Earl of Forfar; William, Earl of Annandale; and William, Lord Ross—four commissioners of the treasury; the Earl of Sutherland, a colonel of foot; Viscount Tarbet, the clerk register; Lord Belhaven, who had been a captain of horse at Killycrankie; Lord Carmichael, a colonel of dragoons; Sir Thomas Livingstone, commander-in-chief of the Scottish troops, and others.

On the 20th of April, 1694, after having resided four years on the rock, the little garrison departed in their boat, and ten days after the fortifications were dismantled. After all their risks and perils, they had won only honour, and with it the admiration and gratitude of all the friends of King James.

Traces of the siege are still found at times. An antique cannon, broken in two, is still lying on the giddy verge of the northern cliff, and fragments of exploded bombs and cannon-balls are frequently found embedded in the rank guano of the sea-birds. From a passage in the works of Hugh Millar, the garrison would seem to have been put to their shifts for *flints*. In describing the Bass, "I saw," continues the great geologist, "a large cannon-shot, much encased in rust, which had been laid bare by the rabbits in this curious deposit. It had sunk in the débris to the depth of about *four feet*, immediately under a partial breach in the masonry, and had not improbably dealt a severe blow in the quarrel of William of Nassau. But what I considered the most curious remains were splinters of black flint, exactly resembling the rejectamenta of a gun-flint maker's shop. In digging to ascertain, if possible, for what purpose chips of black flint could have been brought to the Bass, my companion disinterred a rude gun-flint, exactly such a thing as I have seen a poverty-stricken poacher chip for his piece out of a mass of agate or jasper. The matchlock had yielded its place, only a short time before, to the spring-lock with its hammer and flint; and so, during their leisure hours on the ramparts, the soldiers of the garrison had been in the practice of fashioning their flints for themselves, and of pitching the chips, with now and then an occasional abortion, such as the one we had just picked up, over the walls."*

David Blair joined King James in France, where he died in exile; but William Crawford, of Ardmillan, remained at home, and was married to Margaret Kennedy, of Balderstone. He died soon after.

* Geology of the Bass. Some interesting details of the isle and of its siege, will be found in the Appendix to Crichton's *Memoirs of Blackadder*.

Captain Charles Maitland, the ex-deputy governor of the Bass, went to Flanders on a visit to his brother, Brigadier-General James Maitland, who had been a subaltern of the Scots Foot Guards in 1675, and who became a lieutenant-general on the British establishment in 1709. By this officer he was presented to King William (then at the head of the allied armies), by whom he was offered a captain's commission. The king added, that he was "confident that an officer who had served King James with such uncommon fidelity would be equally true to him."

"I thank your majesty," replied Maitland, "but I beg to decline your offer."

This anecdote (which is recorded among the Transactions of the Scottish Antiquaries) reflects equal credit upon both.

Bearded hermits, sandalled monks, plumed courtiers, and blue-bonneted covenanted, have all passed away, and been numbered, in succession, with the things that were, and the solitary isle has long since been abandoned to its primitive inhabitants, the wild sea-birds; but, by the events we have just narrated, it still retains, what a writer has styled, "the dubious honour of being the *last* spot of British ground to yield to the more constitutional government introduced by the Revolution of 1688."

Exactly sixty years before, the Bass rock was successfully held against a less formidable enemy by its proprietors. George Lauder and his mother, "Dame Isobel Hepburn, Lady Bass, ensconced themselves in the tower and defied their creditors. At length the Scottish lords of council granted them "protection," which is, it thus appears, not solely the modern bankrupt's privilege.

PAST AND FUTURE.

I COUNT it profitless to muse and sigh

O'er memory's record of our buried years;

Were it not best to lay it gently by,

And bid our eyes, while yet unwept with tears,

Look onward, upward: onward to the grey

Dim haze which shrouds the future from our sight:

And upward, towards the bright, infinite day,

Whose mystic dawn shall triumph o'er our night?

Well might we sigh and weep, if sigh or tear

Could change the volume in a single page,

Cleanse one foul spot, or soothe one fretting fear;

Well might we weep and sigh, from youth to age,

If sigh, or tear, or prayer, could e'er prevail

To blot the evil from our life's told tale.

Well might we weep and sigh if that could bring

Back to our groping arms and empty hearts, our lost;

Or win the sun of youthful hope to fling

Its olden brightness on our tempest-tost

And waste heart waters. But it cannot be;

And since it cannot, wherefore should we weep?

Were it not easiest to trust that He,

Who all things past and future aye doth keep,

Will mingle mercy with His dread survey,
 And give us strength life's future page to write
 In characters as pure as mortal may?
 Yea, we will trust Him, bidding heart and eye,
 Forsake the past, and look up faithfully.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

THEATRICAL FAREWELLS. GARRICK AND
 SIDDONS.

I. DAVID GARRICK.

At the beginning of 1776, theatrical London was both startled and distressed to hear rumours clear and confident in the clubs and in the park, louder and more certain in the green-rooms, of Garrick's intention to leave the stage, where he had so long reigned the delight and wonder of the age, and the emperor of all hearts.

It had long been known that Barry's rivalry (Barry was the most ardent and tender of Romeos) had compelled the great actor to exertions far beyond his strength. The death of his energetic coadjutor, Mr. Lacy, the joint patentee of Drury Lane, had also thrown upon Garrick a burden too great for him to bear. From 1773 (the date of Mr. Lacy's death), he had almost abandoned Bosworth Field, Dover cliff, and the gloomy fortress at Dunsinane, for his even more congenial haunts in the wainscoted drawing-rooms and palace ante-chambers of comedy, where, aided by charming Mrs. Abington, the best would-be fine lady ever seen on the boards, he still bantered as Benedict, mounted the ladder as Ranger, blustered as Don Felix, or became a mean and exquisite gull as Abel Drugger.

In January, 1776, appeared a poor farce of Colman's, called *The Spleen*, or *Islington Spa*, meant to ridicule the affectations of would-be fashionable citizens, who, discontented with their own snug independence, had vainly tried to turn a Pentonville chalybeate into the centre of a second city of Bath. The piece ran for a fortnight only. In the prologue, written by Garrick with his usual neatness and vivacity, public allusion was first made to the intended retirement of the author. After describing the restless cit, who, envious of Lord Flimsy and the Maccaronis, retires to his villa at Islington, and, among his leaden gods and box-tree peacocks, sighs for the merry bustle of Butcher-row, the writer says:

The master of this shop, too, seeks repose,
 Sells off his stock-in-trade—his verse and prose,
 His dagger, buskins, thunder, lightning, and old
 clothes.

Garrick was already preparing for that solemn last scene of all

That ends this strange, eventful history.

A few days after the appearance of *The Spa*, Garrick produced the farce of *Bon Ton*. He had written this satire of the follies imported from France, as a present for his favourite actor, King, who appeared in it, together with arch Mrs. Abington and sensible Miss Pope.

The versatile genius who had first appeared

on the stage at Ipswich in 1741 as Aboan, in Southern's *Oronoko*, Sir Harry Wildair, and Harlequin, was about to close his triumphs, and leave his mimic world.

He was rich, he was famous; the wise, the learned, and the beautiful crowded to his almost royal levees still:

Superfluous lagged the veteran on the stage.

The call-boy now spoke with a hollow and warning voice, and the prompter was old age. It had been a long phantasmagoric life of pleasure and success since, as a trim lad of eighteen, he and his strange, clever, unsuccessful schoolmaster had set out from Lichfield to try their fortunes in London. A long procession of years had passed before him since in Goodman's Fields he first defied the rivalry of Macklin, Quin, and Cibber, and set Mrs. Clive, Mrs. Pritchard, and Mrs. Woffington talking of the clever young man with the large dark eyes, who had been praised by Lord Orrery, and who had even drawn the great Mr. Pope from Twickenham. Hogarth, too, was full of admiration. The string of the "quality" carriages had reached from Temple Bar to the little theatre. The mad king, the generous hero, the butterfly rake, the honest farmer, the maddened tyrant, had all changed at last into the one final character of the almost worn-out old man. Those great elastic eyebrows had lost their spring; the subtle mouth its magic power; those supernatural eyes their hidden fire and sunshine; age, cruel age, had disenchanted that gifted face, which had so well mimicked all the passions of our species; the voice, once clear as a clarion, melodious as a flute, varied as the note of a mocking-bird, was fast sinking to childish treble. All London felt keenly what a source of pleasure was henceforth to be closed to them. Garrick's parsimony and nervous vanity were now forgotten; his virtues and genius better remembered. His *Brute* and *Bayes*, his *Lear* and *Richard*, his *Kitey* and *Drugger*, had been the friends of the town for years, and the most intellectual men had spent their most innocent and happiest hours in their society.

That Garrick felt intense pain at the thought of this impending parting there can be no doubt. He was like the sleeping knight in Tasso's enchanted garden of Armida, now at last to be roughly awoke and expelled from the golden world of dreams. The stage crown was to be laid down, the stage sceptre to be given to other hands. The painted forests of Arden were to be quitted, the dim magic light of the darkened stage, the pasteboard fortresses, and Richard's royal couch, were to be seen no more; red fire was no longer to glare upon him; stage jewels were to be laid aside. He was to go forth in his old age into the cold, garish, prosaic outer world, and to leave his courtiers and armies, his conspirators and peasants, to be governed by another. Like Caliban, he must almost have wept to "dream again."

Shakespeare himself had a deep sense of the

perishable nature of an actor's fame. It is easier to describe a special rainbow, or the swift vision of a momentary sunbeam, than to convey an impression to those who have not seen him what even Robson was like in his climaxes of nervous irritation alternating with gaiety. Who can describe justly Macready's Werner or Virginius, the elder Kean's tiger-like rage, or the generous manliness of Banister? The actor's true fame perishes with his life; after death it is only a fitful and varying tradition. It soon becomes disputed whether Roscius or Garrick were or were not better than the Boanerges of this or that theatre, he who acts Othello like the mad butcher that he is, and croaks through Hamlet like the raven on Macbeth's battlements. *Ita vita!* such is the fame of the actor. It really ceases when the footlights are put out after the last appearance. The poem and novel may be eternal, the picture has its own more precarious but still long existence, the conquest is remembered by the future misery it entails; but the actor, the actor is

Such stuff

As dreams are made of, and his little life
Is rounded by a sleep.

His painted world of laughter and of tears is but the baseless fabric of a vision; his cloud-capped towers are but as the evening shadows, and melt into air—into thin air.

Garrick had already felt some bitter foretastes of death. The worst kick the dying lion receives is from the hoof of the ass. The detractors, who often appear like bats in the twilight of a great man's life, began to say that as Ranger he had got old in the legs; that his face was now too wrinkled and his eye too lustreless for Romeo; that his voice was too hoarse and hollow for Hamlet. His dimples had become pits, said they; his neck was sinewy; his upper lip was like a turgid piece of leather. Cibber had been better as Bayes, Quin as Sir John Brute and Macbeth; the town had disliked his Hotspur. O'Brien had been a smarter coxcomb and man of fashion. Mrs. Clive had surpassed him in low comedy, Quin in Lear, Johnson in nature, Mrs. Porter in passionate tragedy. These foolish haters hated as strongly as if they could derive pecuniary benefit from a great man's downfall, and Garrick, all nerve and vanity, Garrick, the man who wrote his own critiques, quivered at every gnaw-bite as if he had been crunched by the teeth of a tiger.

Three acts are done, the jest grows stale,
The lamps are growing dim and pale,
And reason asks *cui bono?*

The night before he quitted the stage for ever, Garrick bade farewell to tragedy. He played Lear to the Cordelia of Miss Younge. His biographer, Murphy, tells us where Garrick got his model for the mad king. He says:

"When he began to study this great and difficult part, he was acquainted with a worthy man who lived in Leman-street, Goodman's

Fields; this friend had an only daughter, about two years old; he stood at his dining-room window fondling the child, and dangleing it in his arms, when it was his misfortune to drop the infant into a flagged area, and killed it on the spot. He remained at his window screaming in agonies of grief. The neighbours flocked to the house, took up the child, and delivered it dead to the unhappy father, who wept bitterly, and filled the street with lamentations. He lost his senses, and from that moment never recovered his understanding. As he had sufficient fortune, his friends chose to let him remain in his house under two keepers appointed by Dr. Monro. Garrick frequently went to see his distracted friend, who passed the remainder of his life in going to the window, and there playing in fancy with his child. After some dalliance he dropped it, and, bursting into a flood of tears, filled the house with shrieks of grief and bitter anguish. He then sat down in a pensive mood, his eyes fixed on one object, at times looking slowly round him as if to implore compassion. Garrick was often present at this scene of misery, and was ever after used to say that it gave him the first idea of King Lear's madness."

As the curtain fell on the dead king and his dead daughter, Lear and Cordelia lay on the stage side by side and hand in hand. They rose together, and hand in hand still went in silence to the dressing-room, followed by many of the company. They stood there, Lear and Cordelia, still bound by the strong sympathy of the play, hand in hand, and without speaking. At last Garrick said, mournfully, and with a sigh:

"Ah! Bessie, this is the last time I shall ever be your father—the last time!"

Then their hands fell asunder.

Miss Younge replied with an affectionate hope that, before they finally parted, he would kindly give her a father's blessing.

Garrick raised his hands solemnly; Miss Younge bent her knee, and bowed her fair head, as the old man fervently prayed God to bless her. Then slowly turning, he said, "May God bless you all!" and retired to take off his King Lear dress for the last time.

When Quin was dying at Bath, he said: "I could wish that the last tragic scene were over, and I hope I may be enabled to meet and pass through it with dignity." On Garrick, that actor who had played a hundred characters, and had originated thirty, that last scene had now opened. Regret, sorrow, and gratitude, were struggling in his heart.

On the 10th of June, 1776, Garrick appeared for the last time as Don Felix in the comedy of the Wonder. He had wished to close with Richard the Third, his first great triumph; but he had considered that after the nervous tumult of the tent-scene, and the rage and passion of the battle, he should be worth nothing, and might be too fatigued to utter his farewell. He braced himself up to be once more dazzling, vivacious, airy, gallant, and witty. He resolved to show himself as if passed through Medea's

caldron, again young and vigorous. Garrick's thrift had been cruelly ridiculed by Foote and other heartless wits as the basest stinginess. His last public act, however, was a work of charity. He had always been a generous rival and a kind manager. He now wished to enforce on a thoughtless and somewhat reckless race the necessity of providing for the poor stragglers from the ranks, and for the defeated and beaten down in life's long and tough battle. A fund for old and infirm actors had been incorporated at Drury Lane by his exertions; he had also provided an annual benefit to help forward the charity. He now announced that the profits of his last night were to go to this admirable fund. His prologue on this occasion was admirably neat, full of humour, and contained many happy allusions to the motley contrasts of theatrical life:

A vet'ran see! whose last act on the stage
Intreats your smiles for sickness and for age;
Their cause I plead; plead it in heart and mind,
A fellow-feeling makes one wond'rous kind!
Might we but hope your zeal would not be less,
When I am gone, to patronise distress,
That hope obtain'd the wish'd-for end secures,
To soothe their cares, who oft have lighten'd yours.

Shall the great heroes of celestial line,
Who drank full bowls of Greek and Roman wine,
Cæsar and Brutus, Agamemnon, Hector,
Nay, Jove himself, who here has quaff'd his nectar!
Shall they, who govern'd fortune, cringe and court
her,

Thirst in their age, and call in vain for porter?
Like Belisarius, tax the pitying street,
With "date obolum," to all they meet?
Shan't I, who oft have drench'd my hands in gore,
Stabb'd many, poison'd some, beheaded more,
Who numbers slew in battle on this plain,
Shan't I, the slayer, try to feed the slain?
Brother to all, with equal love I view
The men who slew me, and the men I slew:
I must, I will, this happy project seize,
That those, too old and weak, may live with ease.

Suppose the babes I smother'd in the tow'r,
By chance or sickness, lose their acting power;
Shall they, once princes, worse than all be served?
In childhood murder'd, and, when murder'd, starv'd?
Matrons half ravish'd, for your recreation,
In age should never want some consolation:
Can I, young Hamlet once, to nature lost,
Behold, O horrible! my father's ghost,
With grizzly beard, pale cheek, stalk up and down,
And he, the royal Dane, want half-a-crown?
Forbid it, ladies; gentlemen, forbid it;
Give joy to age, and let 'em say—you did it.

To you,* ye gods! I make my last appeal;
You have a right to judge, as well as feel.
Will your high wisdom to our scheme incline,
That kings, queens, heroes, gods, and ghosts, may
dine?

Olympus shakes!—that omen all secures;
May ev'ry joy you give be tenfold yours.

Tuning himself by this playful and happily written prologue to his painful task, Garrick delivered it gaily, and with the true point and sparkle, and then went through his part of Don Felix with great humour and assumed vivacity.

Now came the awful moment that was to extinguish at once the sunshine of thirty years of public favour. He had now to close down over his own head the lid of his own coffin. The pleasure, pride, and hope of his life had been his success upon that stage upon which he was now about to turn his reluctant back. He had had the good sense to feel that verse would be too restricting a vehicle for his feelings of sorrow, and with his fine sensitive countenance quivering with unfeigned emotion, he advanced and addressed the audience in these simple but touching words:

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—It has been customary with persons under my circumstances to address you in a farewell epilogue. I had the same intention, and turned my thoughts that way; but I found myself then as incapable of writing such an epilogue, as I should be now of speaking it. The jingle of rhyme and the language of fiction would but ill suit my present feelings. This is to me a very awful moment: it is no less than parting for ever with those from whom I have received the greatest kindness, and upon the spot where that kindness and your favours were enjoyed. [Here his voice failed him; he paused, till a gush of tears relieved him.] Whatever may be the changes of my future life, the deepest impression of your kindness will always remain here—here, in my heart, fixed and unalterable. I will very readily agree to my successors having more skill and ability for their station than I have had; but I defy them all to take more uninterrupted pains for your favour, or to be more truly sensible of it, than is your grateful humble servant."

Having uttered these sentiments, he bowed respectfully to all parts of the house, and at a slow pace, and with much hesitation, withdrew for ever from the presence of the town.

The audience felt what it was losing, and was reluctant to part—parting is such sweet sorrow. They felt, as Dr. Browne had written, that this great genius had dignified the stage, had "restored it to the fulness of its ancient splendour, and with a variety of powers beyond example established nature—Shakespeare and himself." The gaiety of the nation, as Johnson said, was eclipsed by his exit. Men were seeing and hearing, for the last time, what Smollett had praised:

"The sweetness and variety of tones, the irresistible magic of his eye, the fire and vivacity of his action, the elegance of attitudes, and the whole pathos of expression."

Every face in the theatre was clouded with grief, tears were bursting from many eyes and rolling down many cheeks. The sorrow was electric, and spread from heart to heart. The cry of "Farewell" resounded from box to box, and seat to seat, till it became a mighty agitated clamour like the moan of a troubled ocean. A sun had gone down after a day of changeless lustre; the end of the theatrical world seemed come.

Garrick soon after signed the deeds for the sale of half his patent to Sheridan, Ford, and

* To the upper gallery.

Lindley, and retired to his pretty and tranquil villa at Hampton. He died on January 20, 1779, at his house, No. 5, Adelphi-terrace. He was buried grandly in the Abbey—a fitting place for the grave of so wonderful a man. Years afterwards, Dr. Johnson and Boswell were one evening, in the summer evening stillness, looking over the rails of Adelphi-terrace at the Thames flowing below them, dark, silent, and mysterious as Lethæ. After an interval of thoughtful silence, Boswell said:

"I was thinking just then of two friends we have lost, who once lived in the buildings behind us. Topham Beauclerk, and Garrick."

"Ay, sir," said the great man, tenderly, "and two such friends as can never be supplied."

It is hard, almost impossible, to decide now whether Garrick was the greatest actor that had appeared up to his own time. Quin was too heavy and deliberate to be compared with him. But Betterton must have been a great genius to have so fascinated Steele, and to have won the highest eulogies of a clever and sagacious observer of such experience as Cibber. His agony as Othello, his graceful energy in the speech to the senate, the reverential love with which as Hamlet he addressed the Ghost, seem to have almost transcended any effort of Garrick's; but then Betterton was probably as much too oratorical and conventional as Kemble seemed to be beside Edmund Kean, or as Quin himself beside Garrick. The man, too, who used to play Macbeth in a brown velvet court-dress must have had a different ideal to our own more naturalistic school, or he would have felt the outrageousness of such a convention.

Perhaps, after all, it is by a résumé of Garrick anecdotes that we get the best idea of the great actor. One of his most extraordinary powers seemed to have been the instantaneous quickness with which he could assume any character, or pass from tears to laughter. Betterton, when dressed for Lear, remained Lear, and took his wine at the side-scenes with the gravity of a monarch. Garrick would rise from the side of dead Cordelia, skip into the green-room, and gobble like a turkey-cock to amuse Peg Woffington or Mrs. Clive. He played the dagger-scene in ordinary dress to please Grimm, and the room, full of German critics, burst into involuntary shouts of applause. The next moment he was giving them a pastrycook's boy who has let a tray of tarts fall in the gutter, and is at first stupefied, then noisy in his blubbering. We all know the story of the Garrick fever, a fresh epidemic that he caused by his crowded houses. The proverb still extant, of "clever as Garrick," speaks loudly, too, for his genius and his fame. He astonished Hogarth by assuming the face of Fielding, of whom no portrait existed. In Paris once, he nearly frightened the driver of a fiacre into fits by getting in at one door in the dusk, getting out at the other, and returning to get in each time with a new face and walk. When he and Preville, the French actor, both competed which could feign drunkenness the better while

riding, Garrick carried off the bell, in the opinion of every one, by showing that Preville was fairly drunk everywhere except his legs, but that they remained stolidly sober. When he sat to Carmontelle for the picture of the comic Garrick watching the tragic Garrick, he kept up an incessant facial change from wild joy to sadness, terror, rage, anguish, and despair. Like his friend Hogarth, he was a great student of street faces. One night during a fierce parliamentary debate in the year 1777, an angry member, catching sight of Garrick's droll watchful face, moved that the gallery should be cleared. Burke instantly sprang up like a rocket, and pleaded for the great master of eloquence, from whom he himself had derived many of the graces of oratory. Black-browed Fox and dexterous Townshend followed, and also claimed Garrick as their preceptor. He was instantly excepted from the general order, and remained in the gallery, pleased and triumphant, to the infinite vexation of the honourable gentleman who had moved his expulsion. These stories, and such as these, prove how deep an impression Garrick's genius made in the minds of even the greatest men of his era.

II. MRS. SIDDONS.

That great tragic actress, Mrs. Siddons, the daughter of a strolling manager who had originally been hairdresser to the company, made her first appearance on the stage almost as soon as she could speak. Lord Ailesbury and Lady Boyle patronised her at Cheltenham soon after her marriage, and mentioned her to Garrick, who gave her an engagement at five pounds per week. She was young, fragile, and timid then, and Garrick never cared much about her. He told her her arms moved awkwardly, and she declared "that he was afraid she would overshadow his nose." Mrs. Abington, however, asserted her genius, and she soon afterwards went to Bath. Henderson praised her there, and her triumph began. In 1782 she came to London, and astonished the town as Isabella in Southern's play. From that moment her fame began. When she played Jane Shore, the ladies sobbed and shrieked; the men wept, and fainting fits were of momentary occurrence in the boxes. Her Calista and Belvidera touched every heart. When she played Mrs. Beverley, in the Gamester, the pit used to curse and threaten and yell at the wicked Stukeley, and people, afraid of the excitement, have been known to stay in the lobby and look in at the square glasses of the box doors, so as not to hear the words, but only see the wonderful face. Once, when she played Agnes in the Fatal Curiosity, a gentleman in the pit went into hysterics. In the fainting scene in Tamerlane, she was once so deeply moved that she really swooned. Whether as Lady Macbeth, Cordelia, Volumnia, or Queen Katharine, she was always classical, majestic, graceful, sublime, inspired.

In 1812 this great actress took her farewell

of the stage. She had for some time been wishing to realise ten thousand pounds, and escape the fatigues of her profession. Latterly her enunciation had grown too slow, her straining for effect too visible. Yet there were regrets that she whispered to herself and bosom friends. To Mrs. Piozzi she said:

"This last season of my acting I feel as if I were mounting the first step of a ladder conducting me to the other world."

She did her best, however, to make her sunset a tropical one; for she performed fifty-seven times in her last season, and in fourteen favourite characters: Lady Macbeth, Mrs. Beverley, Lady Constance, Elvira, Euphrasia, Queen Katharine, Isabella (Fatal Marriage), Isabella (Measure for Measure), Belvidera, Hermione, Volunnia, and Mrs. Haller.

She chose for her final play Macbeth; the Thane's dark and dangerous wife being one of her greatest triumphs, although play-goers asserted that Mrs. Pritchard had had more dignity and more compass, strength, and melody of voice. In the sleeping-scene the older critics claimed for Mrs. Pritchard sighs of deeper agony, and a voice more sleepy and more articulate. Yet was her acting divine. She moved like a prophetess; her beautiful face was the interpreter of a noble mind. She moved like a queen, and spoke like a Pythoness. As Hazlitt says finely: "The enthusiasm she excited had something idolatrous about it. We can conceive nothing grander. She embodied, to our imagination, the fables of mythology of the heroic and deified mortals of elder time. She was not less than a goddess or than a prophetess inspired by the gods. Power was seated on her brow; passion radiated from her breast as from a shrine. She was Tragedy personified." The public was gazing for the last time on her who, as Campbell said, had "increased the heart's capacity for tender, intense, and lofty feelings."

On the farewell night, her old inspiration seemed to have returned. She was supernatural from the moment she instilled into the chieftain's ear the first poisonous thought of evil till the time when, a mere wreck of remorse and disappointed ambition, a miserable queen, she moved like a phantom of the night, muttering fragments of her dreams all pervaded by the one racking thought. Her eyes were open, but they were consciousnessless and blank. The soul was absent, and in torture. When she rubbed her thin white hands in horrible remembrance of the blood that had once bathed them, the house shuddered with an ague fit of horror and of pity.

At the close of this scene the applause was frantic and ungovernable. Many persons stood upon the benches and, dreading an anti-climax, shouted requests that the performance might close when Mrs. Siddons left the stage. An actor then came forward and at once promised that this wish should be complied with.

The curtain was dropped for twenty minutes, then rose, and discovered Mrs. Siddons, dressed simply in white, sitting at a table. She came

forward through a tornado of applause, which prevented her speaking for some time. When the lull spread, she moved forward in her own queenly way, and delivered the following address, written for her by her nephew, Mr. Horace Twiss:

Who has not felt, how growing use endears
The fond remembrance of our former years?
Who has not sigh'd, when doom'd to leave at last
The hopes of youth, the habits of the past,
The thousand ties and interests, that impart
A second nature to the human heart,
And, wreathing round it close, like tendrils, climb
Blooming in age, and sanctified by time?

Yes! at this moment crowd upon my mind
Scenes of bright days for ever left behind,
Bewildering visions of enraptured youth,
When hope and fancy wore the hues of truth,
And long-forgotten years, that almost seem
The faded traces of a morning dream!
Sweet are those mournful thoughts: for they
renew
The pleasing sense of all I owe to you,
For each inspiring smile, and soothing tear—
For those full honours of my long career,
That cheer'd my earliest hope, and chased my latest
fear!

And though, for me, those tears shall flow no
more,
And the warm sunshine of your smile is o'er,—
Though the bright beams are fading fast away
That shone unclouded through my summer day,—
Yet, grateful Memory shall reflect their light
O'er the dim shadows of the coming night,
And lend to later life a softer tone,
A moonlight tint—a lustre of her own.

Judges and friends! to whom the magic strain
Of Nature's feeling never spoke in vain,
Perhaps your hearts, when years have glided by,
And past emotions wake a fleeting sigh,
May think on her, whose lips have pour'd so long
The charmed sorrows of your Shakespeare's
song:—

On her, who parting to return no more,
Is now the mourner she but seem'd before,—
Herself subdued, resigns the melting spell,
And breathes, with swelling heart, her long, her last
Farewell!

Towards the close of the address Mrs. Siddons became much agitated, and when, after some pauses, it ended, Kemble, in his grand Roman way, came and led his sister from the stage amid whirlwinds of applause.

Poor Mrs. Siddons! She had had a grand career of almost unalloyed triumph; but still calumny had often stung her. The misdoings of a bad sister, who had had read lectures at Dr. Graham's quack Temple of Health, and afterwards tried to poison herself in Westminster Abbey, were all laid at her door. She was also accused of mean thrift, and of allowing her old father to become a petitioner for alms.

These slanders were, we have every reason to believe, utterly untrue. Mrs. Siddons, to judge from her letters, and the accounts of her intimate friends, seems to have been a high-minded, pru-

dent, self-respecting woman, uninflated by her extraordinary fame, and the high society into which it had led her. After gala days at countesses', where lords and ladies elbowed each other, and stood on chairs in their anxiety to see her, she returned, calm, dignified, and contented, to her quiet home in Gower-street. It might have turned even the wisest woman's head to have Reynolds painting his name on the hem of her garment as the Tragic Muse, and Dr. Johnson calling her "a glorious woman"—a *prodigiously* fine woman, who on the stage was adorned by nature and glorified by art.

As even the sun has spots, so there are certain deductions, however, to be made from even such a fame as that of the Siddons. Mrs. Crawford equalled her as Lady Randolph. Mrs. Cibber rivalled her in Zara. She did little as Juliet. She spoiled Rosalind by prudish scruples about the pretty fantastic male dress necessary to the part. Mrs. Jordan was far more charming in that charming character. Mrs. Cibber surpassed the Siddons as Ophelia. In love she was too solemn, in comedy too heavy. Her Lady Townley wanted airiness; her Lady in Comus, her Katharine, Portia, and Cleone, were by no means successes.

The Siddons' face, though grandly grave and Grecian, was rather too Jewish and prononcé in the nose and chin; the action of her arms dissatisfied even to the last hypercritical men with a difficult taste, like Horace Walpole. In domestic life she retained a certain stiff, tragic manner, which had become habitual with her, as with her brother, John Philip. She stabbed the potatoes at dinner, and said regally and metrically to the servants:

I asked for water, and you gave me beer.

But a great genius left the stage when the dark green curtain fell for the last time on the majestic figure and face of Sarah Siddons.

IN DIFFICULTIES. THREE STAGES.

FIRST STAGE. THE "SPONGING-HOUSE."

I THINK it is Mr. Edmund Yates, in one of his recent novels, who has remarked, that to pay a tradesman's debt in part—to "give something on account"—is like applying a wet brush to an old hat. It certainly makes matters better, but only for a time, and the final state of that creditor's anger is much worse than before. This certainly proved to be the case in my instance. I owed my tailor—a fourth-rate suburban tailor, to whom I had resorted in a moment of temporary insanity—some thirty-four pounds odd shillings. He asked me for the amount two or three times, but was always civil, although pressing. I gave him ten pounds "on account," and on the very next day he served me with a writ for the balance. Having your true Britisher's faith in solicitors—an Englishman has much the same reliance upon an attorney that a Spaniard has upon a priest—I at once went to a gentleman of that pro-

fession, firmly believing that he could, if he liked, get me out of my trouble. This lawyer was of a "most respectable" City firm, and I must acknowledge that, beyond money out of pocket, he never charged me a penny for all he did for me. He looked at the writ, made a note of the day it was served upon me, said he "would put in an appearance"—I did not know in those days what that meant, but I do now—and told me that if I liked to incur three or four pounds expenses, he could manage to "tide over" the business for the next month. I replied that I left matters entirely in his hands, that he must do his best for me; all I wanted was "time." He asked me what proposition he should make the tailor—who, by the way, had also *his* solicitor—and I offered at his suggestion to pay the law costs up to the present time, and give my creditor two notes of hand, payable in one and two months respectively, for twelve pounds odd shillings each. This was agreed on; but a condition was made that the tailor should be allowed to "sign judgment" for the whole amount, so that if I failed to make good either payment, he could at once "issue execution:" in other words, as I had no tangible property of my own, arrest my person and cast me into prison.

When I made this arrangement, and for four years previously, I had been "a traveller," as it is called, for a wholesale tea and sugar merchant. My beat extended over four midland counties, but I came to London every fortnight in order to give an account of the money I had collected, to deliver the various orders I had received, and report upon the new customers I had secured. My salary was only a hundred pounds a year, but I was allowed one pound a day travelling expenses, and a commission of five per cent upon all the orders I received, provided those orders were paid for. On the other hand, whatever bad debts I incurred for the firm, I was charged at the rate of two and a half per cent. If trade were flourishing, I made a very fair income: certainly not less than four or five hundred a year net profit. But, on the other hand, if times were bad, if debts were not paid, or orders not given, or if failures took place amongst the retail grocers who were our customers, I found a difficulty in paying my way. At the time I write of, things had gone very ill indeed all over my circuit. There had been continued strikes in the iron trade, followed by locks out, which were again followed by strikes. The working men and artisans had incurred shop debts which they could not pay, and the grocers, not being able to get in their bills, had got very much behind with their payments to the wholesale firms. The house I represented had a very large amount of money outstanding in the country over which I travelled, and the partners looked exceedingly glum in consequence. Hardly a day passed, on which I was not obliged to report some failure among my clients. The rule of our firm was to regard the failure of every retail tradesman they dealt with as a bad debt, and write it off as

such in the books. Therefore it was that, besides my actual salary and what I could save—very little indeed—out of my travelling expenses, I had not made a sixpence for three months. I had a home in London. On the strength of my traveller's appointment, I had married, and I now rented a small house in Bayswater. My wife's portion was not very large: being merely the furniture of the house we lived in—strictly settled upon herself by her father—and a small annuity of thirty pounds a year, which she had in her own right. When I gave the tailor the promissory notes, I fully expected, as every man who is in debt does, to settle them at the proper time. I could not do this, and when the first was a couple of days over-due, my creditor issued execution against me, and arrested me.

We were at breakfast one morning. It was a Saturday, and I hoped to pass Sunday with my family, get off by a very early train on the Monday to the district where I travelled, and thus dodge my creditor for a month or so, until "something should turn up" which would enable me to pay him. I knew that as the furniture of my house was all settled on my wife, my family could not be worried during my absence; and as matters were beginning to look better in the iron trade, there was some hope, as I imagined, that I should be able to pay off these notes of hand. A knock came at the door, and I heard a man's voice asking for me.

"Very important business from his employers. Must see Mr. Smith immediately;" I heard some one say this to the servant.

Thinking that it was some message from Grumston, Foxley, and Grumston, wholesale grocers, of St. Mary-axe, my much-respected masters, I went up-stairs. We were in the breakfast-parlour, on the basement story. I met in the hall a vulgar, smirking, insolvent, petty tradesman looking man, with a strong smack of the betting sharper and a dash of the out-of-place valet about him.

"Very sorry indeed, sir," he began, "but got a most disagreeable duty to perform. Warrant to arrest your person, sir. Suit of Thomas Griffin, tailor, 64, Letsom-road, Bayswater; debt, twenty-four pounds ten shillings and fourpence; costs, four pounds eight shillings and sixpence. You will have to come with me, sir."

I was so taken aback that I did not know what to say. That very morning I was to have met old Foxley, the managing partner of our firm, and given an account of my stewardship for the past fortnight. I knew that he was no friend of mine, and that if this arrest kept me away for a week or so, he would be glad to discharge me, and give my berth to young Glimpson, the assistant-cashier, who was the son of a friend of his, and was, besides, very spooney on the youngest Miss Foxley. At first—only for a moment, however—the thought came across me to pay this debt out of the money belonging to the firm which I

had in my pocket, amounting to some six hundred and thirty pounds in notes and cheques, and make out some excuse for being twenty-four pounds or twenty-six pounds short in my accounts. But the temptation fled. I asked the officer to step into the drawing-room while I broke the news to my wife. He declared that he must not lose sight of me for a single instant, and, indeed, required me to accompany him to the front door, where he called in a greater ruffian than himself—a big burly man, looking like a retired publican or a bankrupt prizefighter.

"This is my mate," said officer number one, and my mate immediately took a seat in the hall, and commenced sponging his face with a dirty pocket-handkerchief. I remember even in the middle of my worry, and as I considered how the business was to be broken to my wife, wondering where this fellow bought a red and white cotton pocket-handkerchief, and why, on a very cool day in November, he was perspiring at every pore of his red face. He wore, I remember very well, a knitted sort of waistcoat, or Jersey—an article called, in the cheap linen-drappers' shops, a Cardigan. I recollect thinking that this was the first garment of the kind I had ever seen, and asking myself when, or if ever, the very dirty white hat he wore had been new?

But I had something much more important to think about, than the clothes of an assistant sheriff's officer. I called up my wife, told her what had happened, and that I must go with this man. I then made over to her the little book in which I kept my cash account with the firm of Grumston, and which I had, very fortunately, made out the night before, down to the last sixpence. It showed a balance against me, after deducting all my travelling expenses and commissions, of six hundred and ten pounds. As I had six hundred and nineteen pounds in cheques and cash about me, it followed that nine pounds of this was my own. I told my wife to make the best of her way to Grumston's counting-house at once, ask to see old Foxley, deliver over to him the money and the account-book, and to say that I was unwell, and would not be able to leave the house for a few days. "Say your husband has got the ca. sa. fever, marm," joked sheriff's officer number one; but I immediately told him to hold his tongue. I then asked him where he was to take me to, and he said it was optional with me whether I would go to Whitecross-street prison at once, or stay a few days in "Bream's-buildings," off Chancery-lane, the well-known sponging-house. At the latter place I should be much more comfortable, have a bedroom to myself, besides being able to see as many friends as I liked, and up to any hour; but it would be much more expensive. At Whitecross-street the eating and drinking would cost about three shillings a day; at Bream's-buildings board and lodging would be a guinea a day, and all drink extra. What decided me to go to Bream's-buildings was, that

as I was arrested on a Saturday, I feared nothing could be done to get me out that day, my wife's father living down in Devonshire, and he being the only person we could depend upon; and the officer told me that the next day, Sunday, owing to some canting arrangements of the City magistrates, no visitors whatever were permitted to enter Whitecross-street prison. I therefore packed up a small bag of clothes; had a four-wheeler called; and with the first officer by my side, and the insolvent publican on the box—I could not stand *his* being inside with me—off we trundled from Bayswater, in the far west, with orders to the cabman to drive to Bream's-buildings, Chancery-lane, in the central east.

Somewhere about the top of that street of legal fame, turn to the left—going from Holborn—then to the left again, and finally under an archway into a court which seems deserted to noisy children and an occasional forlorn organ-player. This is "Bream's-buildings." Just beyond the entrance, is a house of which you may see all the windows closely and heavily barred. The door is always open, but the bottom of the staircase is secured by an iron gate, as strong as are the cages of the wild beasts at the Zoological Gardens. After paying and discharging the cab—how I envied the driver, who was at liberty to go home to his wife and children, if he had any!—we walked into the house, and a one-eyed man came forward to open the grate at the bottom of the stairs. In his hands was deposited the warrant, or capias as it is termed, upon which I had been arrested, and he was henceforth answerable for my body; the house in which I was thus accommodated pro tem. being the property of one of the sheriff's officers, and an uncommonly valuable property too, I should imagine. The one-eyed man was, I must say, on the whole, exceedingly civil to me. I was shown up-stairs to the "coffee-room," as it was called, being nothing more than a very narrow but somewhat long drawing-room, in which, perhaps, eight people might dine, but not very much at their ease. When I arrived at this blissful resting-place, I found the so-called coffee-room occupied by at least a dozen gentlemen, who, like myself, were all "in trouble." Some few of them had been there for six or seven weeks, paying a guinea a day, besides fabulous prices for everything they drank, rather than go to Whitecross-street where debtors are treated almost like felons. All these persons hoped to make some arrangement or other with their creditors, and get out of limbo without becoming bankrupt; in Bream's-buildings—"the sheriff's hotel," as it is called—no one can remain after he has filed his petition in bankruptcy. By one of those pleasant legal fictions, of which there are many in the English law, the debtor detained here is supposed to be the guest of the Sheriff of Middlesex, although he is, in fact, the very profitable victim of one of the sheriff's officers. For a guinea a day, the inmates of this place get a very uncomfortable hard bed, and in most cases

have to share their room with another person. There are, it is true, two or three single-bedded rooms in the house, but these seem to be always occupied. I can only say for myself, that I had to do with a bed made up upon a very narrow couch in a sitting-room up-stairs. I was the last comer, and the house was very full indeed. The food was good, plain, and without stint, but the profit made by Bream's-buildings in the eating and drinking line, could not have been less than three hundred per cent. For breakfast we used to have strong coarse tea, toast, haddocks, and bacon with eggs. For dinner a joint, vegetables, tart, and cheese. The former meal would have been well paid for at one and sixpence, the latter at half-a-crown; the bed would have been very dear at a shilling. Bachelor artisans of the better class, and unmarried clerks earning from thirty to forty shillings a week, get much better boarded, and infinitely better lodged, for a pound a week, than debtors in Bream's-buildings do for a guinea a day. Beyond the two meals I have mentioned, and a cup of tea in the evening, everything you have in the sheriff's hotel is extra, and, being an extra, is paid for at prices which would make the frequenters of Long's or Claridge's Hotels start. A pint of draught ale from the neighbouring public-house—price threepence all over London—sixpence. Light dinner claret, such as any of Gilbey's agents supply at one shilling a bottle, three and sixpence. Sherry, alias Cape, value one shilling and sixpence in any tavern, five shillings and six shillings a bottle, and other wine in proportion. A message to the west end, such as any commissionaire will do for a shilling and his 'bus fare, costs from two and sixpence to a crown. Bream's-buildings can make no bad debts, for they give no credit. Board and lodging are paid for every day in advance: if not paid by eleven A.M., the debtor is removed to Whitecross-street. Whitecross-street is, in fact, the bugbear with which all debtors are kept in order in Bream's-buildings. Whether they complain of the hardness of the beds, the sameness of the food, the crowded state of the "coffee-room," the dearthness of the wine, or the exorbitant charges of the messengers, there is always one reply: "You should see what you would get at Whitecross-street," or, "If you don't like it, you had better try Whitecross-street." Our butler, keeper, jailer, waiter, general adviser, and consultant on all occasions was him of the one eye, and not a bad fellow from first to last, I am bound to say, was Cyclops. If I were prime minister of England for a day, I would make that man Chief Commissioner of the Bankruptcy Court; for I believe he knows more about the ins and outs of debts, debtors, credit, creditors, writs, ca. sacs, and all the rest of what the insolvent part of this world is interested in, than any individual in England. The charges he makes are not for himself but for his masters, and I believe that more than once he has given credit for a day or two to swaggering big-talking debtors, who have in the end "done" him by leaving Bream's-buildings without paying him

money which he has had to make good to his employer.

In connexion with that employer I heard some curious tales which I believe to be perfectly true, and which show the extraordinary way in which the law is administered in England. There are six or eight—I forget the exact number—sheriff's officers under the Sheriff of Middlesex. Their appointments are so good—the business of capturing debtors is so profitable—that each one who is appointed has to give security to the amount of ten thousand pounds. The popular superstition is, that all sheriff's officers are Jews. This, however, is a fable. Of those who hold these situations only two are Jews, and one of the others is a woman. It must not, however, be imagined that these sheriff's officers go themselves to take debtors captive. They are wealthy, keep their broughams, live in highly respectable streets, and give dinner-parties. They no more do the executive part of their business than Baron Rothschild carries his own bank-notes or cheques to the Bank of England. The taking of men's bodies is left to the officers of the sheriff's officers. Of these, every sheriff's officer has a certain number. When an attorney is determined to do his worst upon a creditor, he puts the execution, or *capias*, into the hands of a sheriff's officer—each of the latter has a certain number of the larger firms of solicitors who employ him, and not his fellows; these lawyers he, curiously enough, talks of as his “clients”—who directly hands it to one of his men. The latter gets a guinea for an ordinary capture, but there are instances when that fee has been increased a hundred-fold. The lady sheriff's officer is the widow of a defunct officer—amongst themselves they always use the word “officer,” without any prefix—who on the death of her husband was allowed to carry on the business upon giving the required security. Until lately there were two of the sheriff's officers who kept sponging-houses—the one a Jew, the other a Christian. Somehow or other the establishment of the former did not pay, and he gave it up in consequence. The latter has kept on his “hotel,” and now enjoys a monopoly of the business. For this the former keeper of the other sponging-house loves him not, and often removes a customer from Bream's-buildings to Whitecross-street without any reason assigned. The sheriff's officer, through whose men a capture is made, has the option to allow his prisoner to remain in the sponging-house or not, as seemeth good to himself. So long as the debtor remains there, the sheriff's officer who has captured him is responsible for him. Should he by any means manage to get away, it is the sheriff's officer who would have to make good the debt for which he is arrested. But once made over to Whitecross-street prison, that responsibility ceases, and devolves altogether upon the governor of the jail. If the debtor have been captured by one of the men employed by the sheriff's officer who owns the establishment in Bream's-buildings, he is safe to remain there as long as he likes, or, at any

rate, as long as he can pay the guinea a day. But not so if he have been taken by the agency of the gentleman who formerly kept the rival hotel. In that case the probability is that he will be removed at a moment's notice without any reason assigned, but that the great man who “took” him wills it so.

And yet, with all its faults, I love Bream's buildings still—that is, I love it more than I afterwards loved Whitecross-street prison. Some of the inmates of the coffee-room had been there for weeks; others had only come that morning. Three or four had been arrested that day, and before night-time paid or arranged their debt, and were free. There was a young Guardsman who remained only three hours in the place. He had been arrested when breakfasting in the Regent's Park Barracks, the debt being on a bill of exchange which he had backed for a friend. He took the matter coolly, knowing that he had the means to pay the amount, and that he would get out of limbo that day. The arrest did not even interfere with his appetite for breakfast, as he told a friend who came to see him when in durance vile. He had offered the sheriff's officer's man a “tenner,” ready money, to wait outside the barrack gate, and then to follow him to a cab-stand, so that the men of the regiment might not suspect there was anything wrong. The “officer” took the money, and did what was required of him, the Guardsman giving his word of honour that he would not attempt to escape in any way. He would have paid the money there and then, but this could not be done. According to the extraordinary rules of debtor-capturing in this country, when an individual is “taken” he must go to prison—that is, either to Bream's-buildings or Whitecross-street—and must remain there until the sheriff's books are searched to see whether there are any other detainers out against him. This searching of the books takes time, and is the cause of a deal of annoyance. Suppose Mr. Robinson is taken in execution for forty pounds. He may have the money ready. But in the mean time another creditor has, perhaps, heard of his being in trouble, and lodged a detainer against him. He might have been able to pay debt number one! but debt number two is more than he can manage, and there is nothing for him but to file his petition, and go through the Bankruptcy Court. Had he been out of prison he might, and very likely would, have made some better arrangement about his debts.

The company at Bream's-buildings was composed of all classes, from the Guardsman to the commercial traveller, myself. I had hardly entered the buildings of Bream, when a specimen of the extortion practised there was brought before me. The assistant “officer”—the insolvent publican—who had helped to capture me, came and asked me for half-a-crown to search the sheriff's office for any other detainers against me. Against this charge I remonstrated, upon two grounds: firstly, that I had heard that the sheriff's books could be searched for one shilling; secondly, that as I could not make any arrange-

ments to pay off my debt and costs that day, but must remain over the succeeding, I could not see why I need search the books now. But the only reply I got was, that there *might* be other detainers against me to such a heavy amount that the sheriff's officer would not think of detaining me at his own risk, but must send me to Whitecross-street. Besides this, the fee of half-a-crown was always charged for searching the sheriff's books when a prisoner first came into Bream's-buildings, and if I did not pay it, I must go to Whitecross-street. Of course I paid it. I may mention that, in Whitecross-street, the charge for this very same operation of searching whether there are any detainers against a prisoner, is only a shilling, though the distance from that jail to the sheriff's office in Queen's-square, is about six times what it is from Bream's-buildings.

Notwithstanding the disagreeable feeling of being behind bars in a cage, I cannot say that the time I passed in Bream's-buildings was altogether an unpleasant one. Men in trouble soon get to know one another. I often pass now at the west-end of London a very languid-looking gentleman, who seems to have hardly energy enough to dress himself. He is the younger son of a peer, and was formerly captain in a crack hussar regiment. This gentleman was five days in Bream's-buildings with me, and a more jolly fellow never drank indifferent Cape wine at six shillings a bottle in that establishment, than did this ex-dragon. He was the life and soul of the party, and as liberal with his very excellent cigars and some very first-rate claret which was sent him from his west-end lodgings, as if he had had the fortune of Baring Brothers. He had been some weeks in the place when I arrived, and occupied (by right of seniority, I suppose) the best bedroom, close to the "coffee-room." There was only one respect in which he and Bream's-buildings did not get on well together. "The captain," as he was called, would never get up before one o'clock, and this put the whole establishment out, more particularly did it annoy a very fiery-faced charwoman who used to make our beds. The captain had a sponge-bath in his room, and insisted upon having that filled when he got up. It would not do, he said, to have it filled overnight, for the room was much too small for it to remain in, unless it was put up on end. Now, there would have been no objection whatever to his having the pail of water for his tub at any reasonable hour, but One-eye, as well as the old lady who made the beds, and whom we called "Capias," strongly objected to bringing it at one o'clock in the afternoon. On one occasion they refused to do so. The captain replied that he never argued with any one, but as he could not dress without his tub, he must remain un-

dressed; and he walked into the coffee-room in his shirt, and remained there until his request was complied with. I never knew how the captain got out of Bream's-buildings, but he got out lawfully, somehow.

Army men—officers in the army, and those who have left the service—clergymen, and—strangely enough—attorneys, seem to form the majority of lodgers in Bream's-buildings. Of course, for one debtor who goes here when he is arrested, a hundred go direct to Whitecross-street. The army men who are taken to Bream's-buildings generally remain some time there, expecting every day to get out, but usually ending by going to Whitecross-street, en route to the Bankruptcy Court. No officer can remain in the service after he has filed his petition, and this is often made the instrument by which money-lenders and others extort more money than they otherwise could from their military victims. The line of conduct which the bloodsuckers pursue is, almost invariably to obtain a lien upon the purchase-money of his commission; so that when the time comes, they force him to sell out, unless his friends help him.

Clergymen generally manage somehow to settle their affairs so that they get out of Bream's-buildings in time. A few, but not many, end by going through the Bankruptcy Court. How attorneys, with their knowledge and cunning of craft, allow themselves to be locked up, exceeds my comprehension. And yet there were several gentlemen of this profession in limbo with me. One had been there for weeks. His clerk used to come to him every morning with a bundle of papers, and he used to carry on his business just as if he had been in his own office: only, as a "matter of course," he could not go out.

Bad as Bream's-buildings is in the charges it makes, I am bound to say that it is nothing compared to a certain sponging-house I have heard of in the City. A friend of mine was arrested once within the limits of the City, and thinking he could easily arrange matters, asked to be kept a few days in custody of the sheriff's officer rather than go to Whitecross-street. Ten days before he could bring matters to a settlement, and his expenses in that time amounted to nearly thirty pounds. It is extraordinary what men will pay rather than go to jail. However, notwithstanding all I expended, it was my fate to go there after all. But why I went, and what I saw when I was in Whitecross-street, must form the subject of another chapter.

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MABEL'S PROGRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

BOOK III.

CHAPTER XIII. A SUDDEN CLOUD IN A SUMMER SKY.

CLEMENT'S abrupt departure had excited very little surprise at Bramley Manor. He was accustomed to make similar journeys, and to make them at equally short notice. His father, who had his own reasons—with which the reader has been made acquainted—for wishing to keep Clement as much as possible in the society of Miss O'Brien, grumbled a little at first, and asked Stephens crossly why the deuce he couldn't find some one else to send, instead of bothering Mr. Clement about the matter. And Stephens had answered bluntly, and with the sort of democratic familiarity prevalent in Hammerham, that there was no one who ought to have been entrusted with the business excepting himself and Mr. Clem, and that if he (Stephens) had absented himself from the office for two days just at that juncture, Mr. Clem couldn't have done *his* work meantime; so it was better as it had been managed. And then Mr. Charlewood had said no more, and on the third day Clement had returned and made his report, which was favourable to the undertaking of the contract. The preparations for Augusta's wedding were going on rapidly. All day long a succession of tradespeople, milliners, jewellers, dressmakers, besieged the lodge gate of Bramley Manor. Augusta's room was constantly strewn with costly fabrics, and the fair owner of the apartment seemed to live in the midst of a billowy sea of silks and laces and cashmeres. Mr. Charlewood's rich friends—and nearly all Mr. Charlewood's friends were rich—vied with each other in the costliness and magnificence of the wedding presents, which poured in on all hands. The friends in question, having assured themselves that the young couple would have ample means to purchase for themselves any article of beauty or luxury that could reasonably be desired, spared no expense in loading them with rich gifts.

The Reverend Malachi Dawson had, of course, presented his bride with several elegant—though by no means vulgarly expensive—offerings. And Mrs. Dawson, who had talked with a good

deal of importance and mystery of the "family jewels" she intended to bestow on her future daughter-in-law, brought out one day a great leathern casket containing a necklace, earrings, and bracelets of opals and pearls—the latter a good deal discoloured—and made them over to Augusta with considerable pomp.

"I would not have them re-set on any account," said Mrs. Dawson, "and I hope that you will not do so either, Augusta. They were worn by my grandmother on her wedding-day, and had already been in her family for two or three generations."

Augusta Charlewood knew quite as much as Mrs. Dawson about the value of jewellery; and she perceived very plainly that the stones were poor and inferior, and that their setting was old fashioned and unmitigatedly ugly, and she inly resolved that her own bridal attire should never be disfigured by so mean a parure. But in showing her trousseau to such female friends as were privileged to behold its glories, Augusta, after dazzling them with the glittering contents of velvet cases, enclosing the choicest workmanship of London and Parisian jewellers, would open a drawer, and taking out the battered old leathern casket, would say loftily, "But, after all, *this* is the gift that is of more value to me than all the rest. It was given to me by dear Mrs. Dawson, and belonged to Malachi's great-grandmother. As a memorial of his *ancestors*, it is priceless; because, of course, you know"—pointing to the brilliant gems around her—"these things can be purchased at any time; but no money can buy an *heirloom*. I look upon this casket with quite a superstitious reverence."

And, indeed, so great was Augusta's reverence for Mrs. Dawson's yellow old pearls, that she never could be induced so far to desecrate the *heirloom* as to wear it.

Mr. Charlewood gave his daughter a very handsome marriage portion, and held out the prospect of her inheriting a still larger sum at his death. The Reverend Malachi Dawson, although not in the immediate possession of a large fortune, was the undoubted heir to considerable entailed property in Ireland; the present holder of which was an aged childless widower. There was, too, the income of the very comfortable living near Eastfield; so that, altogether, Augusta was making by no means a bad match in a money point of view; and as to family! All

the generations of ancestors whose names, as Penelope Charlewood had said, had begun with O, were undoubted historical facts. And there were genealogical trees with more branches than could be counted in a long summer's day, to prove the unsullied and distinguished lineage to which Mr. Malachi Dawson could lay claim. And besides, was there not the *heirloom*?—that precious heritage of bygone days! Altogether, it was unspeakably satisfactory.

Clement's favourable report as to the projected branch line of railway from Ballyhacket to Dunscoorthy had occasioned him to be plunged temporarily into an unusual press of business. There were plans to be examined, calculations to be made, correspondence to be conducted, and Clement threw himself into the work with even more than his wonted zeal.

"Mr. Clem puts the steam on, sir," said Stephens, admiringly, to his master. "He's got a head on his shoulders, and plenty of good will to use it, has Mr. Clem."

"There's no necessity to knock yourself up about this business, Clement," said his father. "It's only a comparatively small job after all. For my part, I was in two minds about having anything to say to it. Our hands are pretty nearly as full as we can manage, just now."

Miss O'Brien, observing Clement's pale face, declared he had grown thin since his return from Ireland, and that he was working himself to death.

"You've never looked like the same creature, Mr. Charlewood, since that day you ran away so shabbily and left us in the lurch," said Geraldine to him one evening after dinner. They were sitting at one end of the long drawing-room, and the rest of the family had gathered to the other extremity of the room, round a table strewn with maps and guide-books; for the wedding tour was being decided upon in full conclave.

"Haven't I, Miss O'Brien? Well, in some cases it may be an advantage to look like a different creature from oneself."

"Now, you don't imagine it's any use angling for a compliment from *me*, do you? And with such very clumsy bait!"

"I am clumsy, I suppose," said Clement, dolefully. Then making an effort to rouse himself, he added, scarcely knowing what he was saying, "I hope you enjoyed the pic-nic."

Geraldine O'Brien looked at him for a moment searchingly out of her clear blue eyes, and then said with a little toss of her head, and perhaps rather more enthusiasm than the occasion warranted, "Oh, *immensely*—quite immensely. I don't know when I've had such a pleasant day."

"I'm very glad of that," said Clement, simply.

Miss O'Brien coloured; but hers was a face in which the roses faded or deepened easily.

"I hope you enjoyed *your* trip," she said.

"Why, that was hardly likely; not but that I have very often enjoyed my business missions. Do you know that I saw a great friend of yours in Ireland?"

"A great friend of mine? Do you mean Arthur Skidley? I know he's in Dublin. But I beg to say that, though we are second cousins, he is *not* a great friend of mine."

"No; I did not mean Mr. Skidley, though I saw him too. I meant Lady Popham."

"What, fairy godmother!" cried Geraldine, clapping her hands. "Oh, you sly, secret creature, never to tell me one word about it!"

Then Clement explained to her, as well as he could, that he had hitherto had no opportunity of speaking to her since his return to Hammerham, and that he had only paid a hurried visit to Cloncoolin, driving over from Kilclare and returning the same night by the train from Ballyhacket to Dublin.

"And what did she say to you? Didn't she give you any message for me? Isn't she charming?"

"She received me very kindly, Miss O'Brien, and asked me to remain at Cloncoolin; but that was impossible."

"And do your sisters know that you went to Cloncoolin? I must tell Penny."

Geraldine was about to call Penelope across the room and impart the news, when Clement stopped her hurriedly.

"If you would do me a very great favour, Miss O'Brien," he said, speaking quickly and in a low voice, "you would not mention to any one what I have told you. Not for the present, that is to say," he continued, meeting her astonished gaze; "of course my people may know sooner or later. I told *you*, because—because I felt that Lady Popham would naturally mention my visit when she wrote to you next."

"Your confidence is flattering, Mr. Charlewood," said Geraldine, with a laugh that was not altogether free from a touch of bitterness.

"If to be trusted be flattering, I suppose my confidence is flattering; because I ask you to be silent on this matter, and I have faith that you will be so, when I tell you that your silence will oblige me very seriously."

"I'll not say another word about it, and there's my hand on the bargain," said Geraldine, deftly slipping her small gloved fingers into his for an instant, under cover of the folds of a lace scarf she wore. Then she got up and walked to the table at the other end of the room, and gave her vote as to the best route from Paris to Italy.

The time sped on, whether employed in work or play, and brought the wedding morning. The weather was as bright and cloudless as if it had been expressly ordered and paid for, and the sun shed an appropriately golden light upon the rich equipages and brilliant toilets of the bridal guests. It even stole into the long dining-room, where a magnificent repast was set forth amidst abundance of hothouse flowers, and touched the gloomy obdurate oak wainscot here and there with a streak of gilding. The bride and bridegroom went through the ceremony with well-behaved placidity, and Augusta looked exceedingly lovely in her costly nuptial robes. It was altogether a most successful wedding; and the only tiny cloud on the general brilliancy of the proceedings was occasioned by Miss Fluke, who insisted on making all the responses in a deep sepulchral voice, and who burst into a loud fit of weeping as soon as the final words of the ceremony were uttered. Jane Fluke—

who was one of the bridesmaids—cried a little too, but in a modest undemonstrative manner, and only as much as she thought becoming.

"My poor friend!" cried Miss Fluke, when they had all got into the vestry—"My poor, poor friend!" And she raised from her damp pocket-handkerchief a face so inflamed with weeping, and so red about the nose, as to present a startling contrast with her white bonnet.

"Upon my word, Miss Fluke," said Geraldine O'Brien, who was irritated by the despondent moan that was being made over the bride, "I don't see, myself, that Augusta is an object of so much pity. Your deep compassion for her is scarcely complimentary to my cousin Malachi."

"Ah!" rejoined Miss Fluke, with a choking sniff, "to the worldly and the thoughtless the ceremony we have just witnessed may not be so impressive; but to the Christian mind there is a deep solemnity in those awful words. My poor dear friend!"

In brief, Miss Fluke was not to be consoled. The party having returned to Bramley Manor, and being seated at the glittering board, Mr. Fluke—who had performed the ceremony with the assistance of two other clergymen—arose and uttered a grace before meat, which was so lengthy and so solemn, and pronounced with such a strenuous uplifting of the voice, as to make everybody exquisitely uncomfortable, and to cause the company to feel vaguely that they had each and all done something to be very much ashamed of. Not till then did Miss Fluke begin to recover her spirits. Having joined in the final Amen with great relish, she fell to eating her breakfast with a cheerful countenance.

The banquet was over, the speeches were made, the toasts drunk, and the bride and bridegroom had departed for the Great Western Railway station, en route for London and the Continent. Walter, too, half hidden behind a pile of fur rugs and a bundle of walking-sticks, had taken a cab and driven away to another station, in order to catch the train for Holyhead, as his leave expired the following day, and he must rejoin his regiment in Dublin.

Then Mr. Charlewood put his head out of the door of his own private room which opened from the hall, and called Clement to come and speak with him. The old man's face—but recently flushed and glowing with excitement and gratified pride—seemed suddenly grown haggard.

"Is anything the matter, sir?" asked Clement, anxiously.

"Hush! Shut the door, Clem. Look here; this is not pleasant, is it?" And Mr. Charlewood put a letter into his son's hand, and watched his face while he read it.

"Good God! Benett and Benett!" said Clement, looking up hastily, before he had read two lines. Then he finished the letter in silence, and laid it down on the table before his father.

"When did this come?" he asked.

"Not a quarter of an hour ago—by the afternoon delivery. I found it on my desk, here, as I came back from putting Augusta into her carriage. Thank God she was comfortably away before I read it."

"Benett and Benett!" repeated Clement. "A house that one would have said was as safe as the Bank of England! It is terrible, father."

"It is bad, very bad, and we shall feel the pinch of it just now, with those India contracts on hand, and the strike amongst those fools of navvies in the north, putting us to all kinds of expense and botheration. But it might be worse, eh, Clem? It might be worse." And the old man looked at his son appealingly.

"Father," said Clement, resolutely, "it's no use deceiving ourselves or each other. This is a terribly bad business. If Benett and Benett is gone, I don't know where to look with confidence. Hinde is sure to follow: he can't keep his head above water four-and-twenty hours unsupported. I tell you what I must do. I must go down to the telegraph-office and send a message to Dublin to say that we must decline the Ballyhackett and Dunscothy contract. It is not too late for that, though in another week it would have been. We can't think of entering into any new undertaking until things look clearer. Send Stephens to the bank with a cheque for whatever you have there at this moment. It can't be much; but my belief is, you have no time to lose. This is the beginning of wide-spread trouble; I seem to see it all before me like a map. I know how many houses were propped up by Benett's. God bless you, father, don't be cast down; perhaps I see things blacker than they are, but it is best to face the worst. You won't distress my mother and Penny just now, of course. Good-bye, God bless you!" Clement wrung his father's passive hand, and darted away, leaving Mr. Charlewood sitting with a white blank face gazing at the open letter on the table before him.

END OF BOOK III.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I. ADIEUX TO KILCLARE.

THE theatrical season at Kilclare, which had begun well, ended brilliantly. Mabel had indeed created quite a sensation amongst the good folks of that town and its neighbourhood. Lady Popham's hint about Miss Bell's benefit held out too good a prospect of a crowded and fashionable audience for Mr. Moffatt to neglect it. The manager forthwith set about negotiating with Mrs. Walton on the subject. "I think," said he, patronisingly, "that as your little niece has done so nicely in Ophelia, it might be a good thing for her if I were to put up her name for a benefit before the end of the season. I like to encourage rising talent, and she really has great promise. I should say that in ten years' time or so she might positively do something very good indeed."

Mrs. Walton took no notice of the flattering hope thus held out, but went straight to the point in her reply.

"I couldn't think of allowing you to announce Miss Bell's benefit, Mr. Moffatt," said she, "unless you gave her some pecuniary advantage in it. There would certainly be a great house, and I think it would be only fair that

she should get something in return for the attraction of her name."

The manager laughed his little grating laugh, which stretched his mouth without lighting up his eyes, and proceeded to debate the terms of the bargain.

Aunt Mary, who could always struggle better for another's advantage than for her own, made a good fight on Mabel's behalf, and succeeded in securing for her the promise of one-half the receipts of the benefit-night after a certain sum, which manager Moffatt was first to deduct for his nightly expenses. Hamlet was again chosen at Lady Popham's especial request, and, true to her word, her ladyship filled the boxes with a distinguished audience. In brief, the house was by far the best of the season, and when Mr. Moffatt's portion of the receipts was deducted there remained to Mabel the clear sum of twenty pounds.

Great were Mabel's delight and astonishment when Aunt Mary presented her with this mighty treasure; for Mrs. Walton had kept the bargain she had made with Mr. Moffatt a secret from her niece, hoping to give her a pleasant surprise.

Of course the first thing to be done was to repay her aunt and uncle the sum they had advanced for her journey to Ireland, and also her fare from Dublin to Kilclare. The disposal of the rest of her money was matter for weighty deliberation. Mabel would have liked to send it all at once to her mother, but she resolved to keep a small sum in hand, in order to supply herself with necessary articles for her stage toilet without applying to her aunt; and then the remainder was despatched by means of a post-office order to Hazlehurst.

The little troupe that had acted together through the late successful campaign was scattered at the close of the season. Some of the performers remained with Mr. Moffatt, and proceeded with him to Dunscothy, a neighbouring town belonging to his circuit. The eminent tragedian from the principal theatres of the United States started for Liverpool, whence he was about to take a slight professional tour, embracing such promising and easily-reached localities as Van Diemen's Land and the Sandwich Islands.

The Trescotts, Mrs. Walton, Jack, and Mabel returned to Dublin; and Mabel was pleased to find, at the last moment, that old Jerry Shaw was going thither also. He was engaged at the Dublin theatre as what is technically termed "second old man." Mr. Shaw had his luggage forwarded to his destination by carrier, and set off with a knapsack at his back, his knotted stick in his hand, and Lingo by his side, to walk to Dublin.

"Are you going to walk all the way, Mr. Shaw?" Mabel had asked, in surprise.

"Every inch of it."

"But won't you be dreadfully fatigued?"

"Not at all. Why would I? Lingo and myself have tramped many a hundred miles together. He's great company on a walk when he's in spirits."

Mabel, on her return from Kilclare, was received by her uncle, Janet, and the Bensas with enthusiasm. A constant correspondence had kept them all thoroughly informed of the progress she had been making at Kilclare, and of her rapid advance in public favour; but they were never weary of hearing all the particulars by word of mouth, and of loading Mabel with praise and encouragement. Jack, too, had brought back solid and satisfactory evidences of industry and steady improvement, in the shape of a portfolio full of studies and sketches. These were all laid before Janet, who examined them carefully, and translated them, as she called it, one by one, for her father's benefit. Although John Earnshaw always preserved a cheerful serenity, and protested that he saw the drawings as well as anybody, through Janet's eyes, there was always a lurking melancholy in these moments, and Mabel frequently surprised the tears in Aunt Mary's eyes as she gazed on her sightless husband bending over his boy's pictures that must be blank to him for ever. At such times Jack's high spirits proved invaluable, and he would presently have the whole family laughing till they cried, at his account of some ludicrous adventure at Kilclare.

Mrs. Walton lost no time in seeing the Dublin manager, and applying to him for an engagement for Mabel. She had taken care to forward to him the Kilclare newspapers with very flattering notices of Miss M. A. Bell's performance.

"My dear Mrs. Walton," the Dublin manager said to her, pleasantly, as he was giving her audience in his own business-room at the theatre, "my dear Mrs. Walton, you and I are too old stagers not to know the value of all that!" and he tapped the Kilclare journals that were lying on the table with the back of his open hand.

"Well, Mr. Barker," answered Mrs. Walton, with great simplicity, "of course I don't expect that you should believe all they say, but at least it is a proof that Miss Bell was well received and successful."

"Well, well," rejoined Mr. Barker, "I'm content to take *your* word for that, Mrs. Walton. But about engaging the young lady—humph!—you see it's one thing to do very well at Kilclare, and, excuse me, quite another to be up to the mark for the boards of *my* theatre!"

"If, as you said just now, you are willing to accept my word as having some value, I don't hesitate to say that I should not be in the least afraid of her making the trial. My niece has a great deal of talent, I assure you."

"No doubt, no doubt, but raw. Come, now, Mrs. Walton, you can't deny that it *must* be raw—very raw."

Mrs. Walton proceeded to combat this terrible charge of "rawness" with what skill she could command; and the manager, who had heard enough from other people to convince him that there must be unusual promise about this girl, and to cause him to make up his mind to give her a trial, graciously condescended to allow himself to be persuaded to give Miss Bell an appearance at his theatre, and, moreover, to

promise that, should her first performance be successful, he would forthwith engage her for the remainder of the season.

"I can't guarantee business, you know, Mrs. Walton," said Mr. Barker, as he shook hands with her. "I never do that to anybody. Miss Bell must put her shoulder to the wheel, and be content to get a little bit of fat occasionally."

Mrs. Walton promised that her niece would not be exacting or troublesome, and that she would swallow such choice morsels of fat as came in her way, with all modesty and gratitude; and then the good little woman betook herself to the small house in the suburban square, to convey the tidings to her niece.

And so the prospect opened out before Mabel of professional advancement and success. She might reasonably hope now to make her way. There was much to be done, much to be endured, no doubt; but the first step was taken, and well taken. If Mr. Barker would but engage her, at ever so humble a salary, she might venture to send for her mother and Dooley. The sum that now sufficed to keep the two latter at Hazlehurst would serve to eke out her own earnings into a fairly comfortable subsistence for them all. They would be together. Together! Was it strange that the joy of this anticipation should be dashed by an unaccountable sinking of the heart at the thought that all ties between herself and Hammerham would be finally broken by this removal of her mother from the old cottage at Hazlehurst? "They are broken already," said Mabel to herself—"quite broken." But yet as long as Mrs. Earnshaw should remain within three miles of Bramley Manor—for it was, after all, of Bramley Manor only, out of all the thousands of houses in Hammerham, that she had been thinking—so long there would seem to be a link of communication between her and her old friends there. "I should like just to know that he was quite happy and contented," Mabel told herself. She had been so ashamed of her first feeling of pain and depression on the receipt of her mother's news about Clement and Miss O'Brien, that she had resolved to think upon the subject frequently and courageously until all such unworthy grudgings should have entirely passed away. Whether any such fixed resolve on her part were necessary to make her think of Clement Charlewood, may, perhaps, be doubted; but in her self-reproach it is certain that, far from checking such thoughts, she encouraged them. Mabel always pictured Clement as happy and prosperous, surrounded by all the luxuries of his wealthy home, employing the energies of his mind in pursuits which he had thoroughly at heart, riding through the green suburban lanes around Hammerham with the beautiful young Irish lady by his side.

Poor Clement! At the very moment that Mabel's imagination was busied with these rose-coloured pictures of his daily life, he was tearing about Hammerham in hansom cabs, haunting the telegraph-office, burrowing in heaps of papers, plans, letters, circulars, contracts, or threading the narrow dingy lanes in the imme-

diate neighbourhood of New Bridge-street and the canal wharves.

There were no more rides in the green suburban lanes. Immediately after the wedding, Mrs. Dawson and Geraldine had taken their departure from Bramley Manor. There was no evening music in the gorgeous drawing-room, no afternoon croquet on the great smooth lawn, no sound of silver laughter or glimmer of gay dresses through the garden-walks. Least of all was there any thought of love-making or the joyousness of a happy wooer about Clement in these days. A man, let him be ever so much in love, cannot think about his affection as constantly as a woman does. He cannot dedicate every thought and action of his life to the one divinity, as she can, offering up her whole being at this paramount shrine, and mixing the remembrance of her idol with every trivial as well as solemn act of her daily existence, from the bright ribbon twined amidst her hair to please his eye, to the hushed prayer she breathes for him to her God. Therefore Clement at this time was assuredly thinking very much less of Mabel than she of him. Down at the bottom of his heart there was still the strong love, obstinately persistent spite of all discouragements; but his head was daily occupied with matters in which this love had no part. And, as to any second passion, any even slightest flirtation with the brilliant Irish girl, we know that the idea of such defection had never crossed his mind. But Mabel did not know it, and went on picturing all kinds of cloud-castles, of which Clement and Miss O'Brien were the happy tenants, and wishing all kinds of unanimous good wishes whereof they two were the objects. And terribly vexed was Mabel to find that she could not be as heartily delighted at these bright visions as she ought to have been; and severely did Mabel reproach herself for not being more joyful in her friend's joy!

CHAPTER II. IN MERRION-SQUARE.

IN the narrative of all that had taken place at Kilclare, which was copiously and faithfully repeated to Mr. Earnshaw and Janet, of course Alfred Trescott's violin solo, and the wonderful impression it had made, was not forgotten. Nor how Alfred had been sent for by the rich Lady Popham of Cloncoolin, and had played to her guests, and been praised, petted, and made much of.

"I am glad of it, truly," said Uncle John. "The fact is, young Trescott's playing is very remarkable, and I was quite sure that it only needed to be heard by competent judges to be highly appreciated."

"Well, do you know, John, the lad behaved so nicely at Kilclare—didn't he, Mabel?—and was altogether so improved, that I have a much better opinion of him than I had. Indeed, I'm afraid I allowed myself to feel a great prejudice against the poor boy," said kind Aunt Mary, whose heart was full to overflowing of the charity that thinketh no evil.

"It's to be hoped that his good fortune may

induce him to work hard, and confirm it," was Janet's practical remark. Jack averred that his prediction that Alfred Trescott would be playing a violin solo at the Philharmonic, in London, before long, would infallibly be fulfilled. Mabel said nothing. She did not like to seem churlishly incredulous as to young Trescott's success, but she could not overcome a secret conviction that there was something hollow and unstable about it all. "You don't seem quite converted to the Trescott worship, Mabel," said her cousin Janet, when the two girls were alone together in their bedroom.

"Oh, I think he is very clever, and plays very beautifully, but I fancy—of course I speak diffidently, because I am no judge—I fancy that he would have to work a great deal harder and more steadily before taking a really first-rate position. And I am afraid he hasn't much power of hard work in him. Poor little Corda, who idolizes her brother, feels that, child as she is."

"No," said Janet, dryly; "you see hard work is *not* pleasant in itself. The results of it are pleasant, undoubtedly. But to shut oneself up to dry solitary labour for five or six hours a day, without any admiring audience to cheer one, is a very tiresome and disagreeable thing. And if one could do without—"

"But *can* one do without, Janet?"

"I believe one cannot be a first-rate fiddler without," said Janet, "any more than one can buy a new twopenny loaf for a penny."

Meanwhile, however, Alfred Trescott was basking with great enjoyment in the sunshine of Lady Popham's flattering praises. He had been twice or thrice to Cloncoolin since the occasion of the first soirée there, at which he had made so favourable an impression, and had played the enthusiastic romantic artist to the height of her ladyship's utmost expectation. It was all vastly delightful. The rich furniture, the lofty rooms, the noble park, the train of bowing servants, were charms which Alfred Trescott was thoroughly able to appreciate and to enjoy. To be praised was in itself a great pleasure, but to be praised by rich titled people, dressed in gorgeous robes and seated on velvet and satin, enhanced the sweetness of the praise ten thousand-fold. Nor was it the slightest drawback to Alfred Trescott's satisfaction that he had an intimate conviction that nine-tenths of his admirers were profoundly incompetent to judge his playing, and that he felt a secret mocking contempt for their ignorance.

In speaking to his patroness about Mabel, he had in truth been warm, almost lover-like, in his praises. During the time at Kilclare, they had been thrown more frequently and intimately into each other's society than had ever been the case before; and Alfred Trescott had not been slow to feel the charm of Mabel's refinement and fresh girlish beauty, and he had given himself up to the enjoyment of her society, until this first feeling had grown into as strong a passion as his nature was capable of. The idea of combating or controlling any strong desire of his own was one totally foreign to the young man's character; and, in the thought of

winning Mabel Earnshaw, there was much that appealed to his worst traits, as well as to whatsoever spark of real love she had inspired him with. Setting aside the selfish gratification of his passion—the having that which he desired (always a paramount object with Alfred Trescott)—his vanity and his malice would be alike gratified by such a consummation. Mabel was a lady born and bred; possessing talents and qualities that could not fail to procure for her a foremost place in her profession; superior by her manners and education to any woman with whom young Trescott had hitherto been on terms of familiar acquaintanceship. So far vanity. And then Alfred had heard from Walter Charlewood a good deal, and divined by his own sharp cunning still more, of Clement's attachment to Miss Earnshaw. I have said that Alfred Trescott hated Clement Charlewood. He hated him because he was wealthy, because he was industrious, because he had been enabled by circumstances to confer upon Mr. Trescott and Corda some pecuniary benefits—which Alfred accepted as a debt, and yet resented as an insult—and partly also because he erroneously attributed to the rich Hammerham contractor something of that contempt for the Trescotts' poverty and profession which he himself would have felt in Clement's circumstances. If young Charlewood really loved Mabel, so much the greater would be the glory and the gratification of carrying her off.

Altogether, when Lady Popham spoke to him of the charming Ophelia, he was already well prepared to assume a love-lorn aspect for the old gentleman's behoof. And finding that the assumption of such aspect gave him an additional interest in the eyes of his patroness, and that she enjoyed the romance of a love-story between her two new protégés with infinite zest, he had no scruple in indulging her fancy to the utmost extent.

With Mabel herself he could not flatter himself that he had hitherto made any progress. "She's as proud as the deuce," said Alfred, "and keeps a fellow at an awful distance." Nevertheless, he by no means despaired. Although he was able to appreciate Mabel's artistic merits, and even the refinement and intelligence of her mind, it was not in the nature of things that he should do justice to her noblest qualities. A life guided and swayed by considerations of duty was incomprehensible and, indeed, incredible to him. "She'll do what she likes best, as far as she can, I suppose. Everybody does. And I don't see why she shouldn't like me best when she finds I am rising in the world."

Such was Alfred Trescott's creed about the matter.

Lady Popham had set her heart on flaunting in the eyes of the world the jewel she had discovered. Her ardour was scarcely at all quenched by the many failures she had encountered in her pursuit of a "genius," and she resolved to introduce her new protégé first to the musical public of Dublin, and then in the following London season to take him to town.

Lady Popham had a house in Dublin—a large old-fashioned substantial mansion, which was always kept in readiness to receive its mistress whenever the fancy might seize her to visit the Irish metropolis. For Lady Popham prided herself on having emancipated herself from the shackles of routine in every possible way, and was wont to declare that she chose to have the full use and benefit of all her possessions at any time or season that might seem good to her. Accordingly, her ladyship arrived in Dublin about three weeks after the Kilelare theatrical season had come to an end, and established herself in Merrion-square for the winter.

Alfred Trescott was engaged at the Dublin theatre, with his father, as a member of the orchestra. Some months ago the Trescotts had looked upon this engagement as a piece of great good fortune, but now Alfred treated the obscure position and humble salary with contempt. Had he been at all able to venture upon such a step, he would unhesitatingly have given up the engagement at once. But the weekly money was very desirable to enable him to make what he considered a good figure in the eyes of Lady Popham and her friends, and he coolly devoted the whole of his salary to his own personal expenses. Poor Corda, who was growing tall and thin, continued to be clad in the poor shabby frock that she had worn for half a year, and which was now sadly too scanty in its proportions. Her little straw bonnet was burnt to a rusty brown, and her boots were not always water-tight; but Alfred's clothes were new and glossy, and well made, and the loving child contemplated her handsome brother in his becoming attire with the most perfectly unselfish delight. Her father, at an early period of Lady Popham's patronage of Alfred, had been very desirous that the rich lady's favour should be extended to Corda. The child herself shrank timidly from the idea of being forced upon Lady Popham's notice, but Mr. Trescott, untroubled by any bashfulness or delicacy on the subject, would fain have had his favourite child share in her brother's good fortune. To the first hint of such a project, however, Alfred had returned a decisive, almost fierce negative.

"Look here, governor," he had said, in his coarsest manner, "you'd better stop this game at once. I'm not going to talk to Lady Popham about Corda. I'm not going to ruin my prospects by trying to fasten the whole family upon the old woman. It'll be much best for Corda and everybody else, in the long run, to let me get ahead. Of course, when I achieve a position, I shall take care of the kid."

So Alfred's visits to Cloncoolin, and subsequently to Merrion-square, were made alone; and whenever Lady Popham chanced to speak to him of his family, she received the impression that his father and sister were heavy burdens upon his earnings, and that they somehow cast a shade upon the brightness of his talents, and clogged his soaring wings.

Her ladyship was very full of business and excitement in these days, for she had resolved

to get up a concert for the purpose of introducing Alfred Trescott, and the drawing-room of her house in Merrion-square became the afternoon rendezvous and lounge of several persons who found it conducive to their interest or amusement to second Lady Popham's hobby.

Mrs. Dawson and Geraldine O'Brien had returned to Ireland immediately after the wedding at Bramley Manor, and were staying in Dublin for a while. Arthur Skidley and his friend Walter Charlewood were also frequenters of the old lady's drawing-room, and she had pressed them into the service with her usual enthusiasm.

"You must bring all the young fellows you know, Arthur—every one of them. And I rely on your good offices, too, Mr. Charlewood," said Lady Popham, à propos of the projected concert.

Walter bowed and coloured with pleasure, protesting that he would do the utmost in his power to make the thing successful.

The two young men had already met Alfred Trescott in the house of his patroness, and—thanks chiefly to the cool self-possession and ready shrewdness of Alfred—the meeting had taken place without embarrassment.

"I have had the honour of being slightly known to both these gentlemen in Hammerham, my lady," said Alfred, bowing, with a nice adjustment of his manner to a golden mean equally removed from servility and impertinence. And then it had been thoroughly understood amongst them that no further allusion was to be made to Plumtree's, or any similar scene of their former meetings.

"Oh, a success!" cried Lady Popham, gesticulating with both her withered little hands, after the Italian manner. "A success it *must* be. Of that there can be no doubt. But voyons un peu, who shall we get to manage all the business part of the concert? If I had but my dear old Neapolitan Maestro di Capella here! Somebody suggest something! Mrs. Dawson, Geraldine, you are both on the committee; I allow no idle members."

Mrs. Dawson, who had come to spend the afternoon, was seated in a large luxurious chair near the window, engaged in embroidering a cushion with very cold, shiny, uncomfortable-looking white beads. She shook her head deprecatingly. "You must excuse me, dear Lady Popham," she said, with an icy smile; "I am totally unacquainted with such matters."

Lady Popham shrugged impatiently.

"Oh, I have it, fairy godmother," cried Miss O'Brien; "there's that nice little man who used to give me singing-lessons last winter. What's his name—Bensa! Bensa, to be sure. I've no doubt he would undertake to manage it, and preside at the piano, and everything."

"Brava la mia Geraldina!" said Lady Popham, jumping up and saluting her goddaughter on both cheeks. "The very thing. He must be sent for instantly, and consulted without delay."

Alfred Trescott, who had been sitting silent, looking over a volume of Spohr's violin duets in apparent absorption, but losing no syllable of

what was being said, now modestly suggested that he knew something of Signor Bensa, and would undertake to carry a message to him for her ladyship.

"A merveille," cried my lady, "only it must be a note. One should always be careful of the conveniences in dealing with artists. They are so extremely, and so justly, susceptible."

So a note was written, begging Signor Bensa, with Lady Popham's best compliments, to favour her by calling in Merriion-square at a certain hour on the following day, and requesting him, should that be inconvenient, to name his own time. And the note, when written, was entrusted to Alfred Trescott to deliver.

"Queer start, that fiddler fellow turning up here, Charlewood," observed the Honourable Arthur Skidley to his friend, as they lounged side by side along the sunny side of the square on leaving Lady Popham's house.

"Yes," answered Walter; "he's in awfully high favour with my lady, too, ain't he? By Jove! I thought at first you wouldn't speak to him, because, you know, at Hammerham you were always saying what a cad he was, and all that sort of thing."

"He's—he's immensely improved," observed Mr. Skidley, thoughtfully, stroking his moustaches.

It may be doubtful whether any very sensible amelioration had taken place in Alfred Trescott's demeanour since those Hammerham days when Arthur Skidley had found him so intolerable. But in our judgments of each other so very much depends upon the point of view.

UNEASY LIE THE HEADS.

"UNEASY lies the head that wears a crown," wrote SHAKESPEARE. Two handsome and young heads have, in these so-called prosaic times, mournfully illustrated his text.

Coiled up at the foot of a mountain, like a snake basking in the sun, on the shore of the blue Adriatic, lies the city of Trieste. Trieste is to Austria what Hamburg is to the north of Germany: what Liverpool is to England. At one time it was no despicable rival to Marseilles as the nearest port for the high road to India. It is still, despite all the disasters which have befallen Austria, a flourishing city. A dark cloud, like a pall, is now hanging over Trieste.

Not far from the town, jutting out into the sea, is an elegant structure, with turrets and gardens, olive, orange, and almond groves, and every luxury which wealth can procure. Miramar was the residence of the Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian Joseph of Austria, brother of the reigning Emperor of Austria. He was born on the 6th of July, 1832, and was married on the 27th of July, 1857, to Marie Charlotte Amélie, a daughter of Leopold, late King of the Belgians. Lord High Admiral of Austria, Governor-General of Lombardy, of a noble generous and liberal mind, Maximilian was beloved by all who knew him. He even conciliated

the good will of a great number of Italians who hated the Austrian rule.

In an evil hour—April, 1864—he was persuaded to accept the offer of the imperial crown of Mexico, to found a great empire; having previously signed a family contract giving up his agnatic rights as an Austrian prince. On the 14th he sailed on board the *Novara*, and landed at Vera Cruz on the 29th. On the 12th of June, 1864, he entered the Mexican capital, and was proclaimed emperor.

The task before him was an arduous one: first to restore tranquillity in his new empire, and establish friendly relations abroad, especially with the United States of America and with England. Abandoned by France, there was no chance left to him. When Marshal Bazaine left Mexico and embarked his troops at Vera Cruz, it was not to be supposed that Maximilian could maintain his imperial claim. In following the chimera of a crown, the Archduke Maximilian took upon himself a personal responsibility, and he has suffered the consequence of it; but France, as is now evident enough, smarts for it.

The execution of Maximilian, despite the horror it excites, was not quite unexpected. He is not the first political leader who has been shot in Mexico. In 1811, Hidalgo, who raised the banner of independence, was publicly executed. In 1822, Iturbide established an empire, and was publicly executed two years afterwards. Betrayed by Lopez, shot by the orders of Juarez, Maximilian will probably be avenged, and Mexico become a portion of the United States. Queretaro will henceforth denote a murder and a grave.

It may interest some of our readers to have a sketch of the unfortunate empress, who deserves the sympathies of every one. We quote from a work published by the Abbé Emmanuel Domenech, ex-almoner to the expeditionary corps, and acting secretary to Maximilian:

"The Empress Charlotte is a tall, handsome woman, with a noble brow worthy of an imperial crown. Her noble and graceful manners indicate the sovereign. Her eyes are brilliant, full of intelligence, and reveal deep thought. When her lips or eyes express sudden contempt, she can in a moment banish the expression by a smile of sadness. There is a touch of romance about her, but her heart and hand are open to the misfortunes of others. Had she been understood and better advised, she would have become a blessing to Mexico by the charitable institutions she would have founded, and the leading part she would have taken in the promotion of the welfare of her subjects. Without being overbearing, she possesses a firm and determined will. Kind-hearted and simple, she can at the same time grasp the most complicated question. At Chapultepec her library consisted chiefly of law-books, and she devoted many hours to study. As regards Mexico and the Mexicans, the empress had not been sufficiently informed to lighten the weight of so heavy a crown. This is not surprising. It does not

suffice to have been in Mexico to understand the country, which requires the most careful and impartial study. Had the Mexicans and strangers who formed her majesty's entourage the courage to enlighten her on the subject? We think not. A sovereign has little time for such studies. What he hears is never the whole truth. As regards the triumphal arches and flowers strewn on the passage of kings and queens, we know that they mean nothing, even when the expense thereof is not defrayed by the civic authorities. If the empress's illusions as regards Mexico lasted till her departure, she is not so culpable as some may suppose at this side of the ocean. She speaks readily of the general policy of Napoleon the Third, whom she seems to admire. "I have heard her," says the writer from whom we borrow this description, "discuss all the European questions with a calmness, lucidity, and impartiality perfectly remarkable. Listening to her, I could forget her age, her sex, her throne, fancying I was listening to the Nestor of an intelligent and enlightened policy. I can understand how that high intelligence was upset. The continual conspiracies, her journey to Paris, and her interviews with the Holy Father, showed her the real state of the new empire. The broken illusion must necessarily have shaken the reason of so rich a nature."

The late emperor is thus described:

"The Emperor Maximilian was of tall stature, and well made. His features were expressive of kindness combined with sovereign dignity. In public, his majesty's affability charmed and captivated all who came near him; in his own house he was beloved by all. His voice was agreeable, and his manners fascinating. Every one who knew him admired him."

Maximilian ought to have governed instead of allowing himself to be governed. Mexico required the head and hand of a Cromwell. French influence, which alone could have supported the new government, was set aside as soon as the emperor arrived. A man of liberal ideas, and not knowing Mexico, he abandoned the conservative party, who gave him the crown, to make terms with the so-called liberals at the cost of his first friends.

IN DIFFICULTIES. THREE STAGES.

SECOND STAGE. WHITECROSS-STREET.

AFTER I had been about a week in the sponging-house at Bream's-buildings, I resolved to remove to Whitecross-street prison. The expenses of a prolonged residence at the former place were more than I could bear, and it was very uncertain whether I could get out of prison, except by going through the Bankruptcy Court: although the only pressing debt I had was that of twenty odd pounds, for which the tailor had locked me up. There were other people to whom I was indebted. There was still hanging over me the balance of a bill of exchange which about a year before my marriage

I had backed for a friend, who had not only failed to meet his engagement, but had failed in business too. The original amount was one hundred and twenty pounds, but I had paid off half. Then there was a sum of fifty pounds owing to an assurance-office to which I had been joint security for my wife's brother, who had borrowed the money to go out to New Zealand. Thus, I owed altogether some three hundred and forty pounds.

The moment it became known that I was in difficulties, every person to whom I owed a penny sent in a detainer against me. I tried very hard to compromise, and proposed to pay by quarterly instalments. I pointed out to my creditors that, if I were kept in jail, my employers must hear of it, and that then my dismissal was certain; that if I lost my situation there was nothing left for me but to go through the Bankruptcy Court, and that if I did this none of them would get a penny. Somehow every creditor seemed to see the force of my logic as regarded his neighbour, but not as regarded himself. Each pressed hard for an immediate settlement of his own claim, but thought that the others might wait. In fact, each hoped by frightening me to cause some friend to come forward with help. But the result was, that at the end of a week's confinement in Bream's-buildings I was further off from a settlement than when I went there. An old lawyer, who was a fellow-sufferer in trouble, strongly advised me to move to Whitecross-street. "They will never believe you are in earnest about going through the court so long as you remain here," he said, "and, what is more, they know the expenses you incur here, and will always think you have friends behind you while you pay them."

In seven days, at Bream's-buildings, my expenses had been as follows:

| | £ | s. | d. |
|--|----|----|----|
| Seven days' board and lodging (such as any mechanic would think very dear at a pound a week) | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Two pints of ale each day, at 6d. a pint (proper price, 4d.) | 0 | 7 | 0 |
| Searching the sheriff's book (proper charge, 1s.) | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| Four messengers, at 2s. 6d. each (any commissionaire would have charged 1s. each) | 0 | 10 | 0 |
| One bottle of "sherry" (second-rate Cape, at 1s. 6d.) | 0 | 6 | 0 |
| Breaking a tumbler (value 6d.) | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Washing a few shirts and socks (my wife said her washerwoman would have charged from 2s. to 3s.) | 0 | 7 | 0 |
| | £8 | 14 | 6 |

As a commercial traveller, I can safely say that the above sum would have kept me for a fortnight at any of the best hotels in London or the country. When the Paris correspondents of our firm, Messrs. Bontemps, sent one of their partner's sons over to London for a week, during which time he remained at the International Hotel, London-bridge, his bill—

and he certainly seemed to have wanted for nothing during his sojourn in the metropolis—amounted to something over four pounds. It is true that he dined out three days of the seven, but he had a friend to dinner on two of the evenings he stayed at home. And I rather believe that the quality of the wine, as well as of the accommodation, at the International Hotel, is somewhat superior to that at Bream's-buildings.

About an hour or so after I announced my determination of moving to the street of the White Cross, old One-eye—the manager, butler, porter, waiter, and superintendent of the sponging-house—ordered a hansom, and off we drove together to the great place of confinement for debtors. Let me here pay a passing tribute to this guardian of the establishment in Bream's-buildings. Cyclops was not a bad fellow, and however infamous is the system which he administered, the fault is not his. Arrived at the prison gate, I paid the cabman, and offered One-eye his cab-fare back and a small gratuity. But he would take neither.

"Don't you think of me," said he; "you'll want all you have, to keep yourself and that poor young missis of yours. When you're up in the world again, I'll come and see you, and take anything you like to offer me."

I was handed over as if I had been a felon to the warder at the gate. The ironclad doors, the barred gates—the one door being shut before another was opened—the cold bare walls, and the continual sight of keys, were dreadfully like Newgate. Not that the officials were unkind or even uncivil—far from it. Here also it is the system, and not those who are obliged to administer that system, that I find fault with. From the moment you enter the place until you leave it, a series of fiddle-faddling contemptible rules, serving no other end than that of annoying the prisoners, are felt at every turn. When I first went to that place of detention on civil process—which ought to be a place of detention and nothing more—I had been ordered by the doctor to take a teaspoonful of tonic medicine three times a day. Of this I had a small bottle in my carpet-bag, but it was "against orders" to allow anything in the shape of liquid to pass the gate without the prison doctor's order, and the doctor had made his round that day, and would not be back until noon on the day following. I had therefore to go twenty-four hours without my medicine. Upon being shown up to the receiving-ward, I found I was just in time for dinner; but my beverage at the meal had to be water. Every prisoner is allowed two pints of beer, or a pint of wine—provided he pays for it—per day, but he must have it brought in before one P.M., or he must go without until next day. Every prisoner is allowed to see, in a vile low pot-house-looking room below, two visitors a day, and no more. If three come to see him, the third is refused admittance, unless some friendly fellow-prisoner, without any friends of his own, takes the visitor on his own list. On Sunday no

visitors whatever are admitted. In my case, as in that of hundreds of other prisoners, these rules about visitors proved ruinous. It was requisite to have friends who could see my creditors, talk them over, and either bring them individually to see me, or come to inform me what was doing. The only persons who were interested in serving me were my wife, her father, and her brother. The former could hardly come to see me without some escort, for a viler set than some of the visitors, or a viler neighbourhood than this detestable prison is situated in, it would be difficult to imagine. Thus, when my wife came to see me, my list of visitors for the day was filled up at once, for she was obliged to bring some one with her. My brother-in-law was a clerk in an accountant's office. He was very active in getting my creditors to sign a paper releasing me from the detainers, on condition that I assigned over to two of their number a certain amount of my salary for the benefit of all. If he could have seen me whenever he liked, and brought one or two of my creditors with him, the whole affair could have been quickly arranged. If he could have only had a couple of evenings or a Sunday afternoon to talk over matters, go over accounts, and bring three or four of my chief creditors, all would have been well. As it was, day after day passed over and nothing could be done. On Sunday, prisoners might read their sporting newspapers; they might lounge, "loaf," grumble, swear, and learn from the sharpers and swindlers among them lessons in rascality of which they had never before had the least idea; but to see their wives, their children, their friends or relatives, or to make such arrangements as their means would allow, No.

After a fortnight in Whitecross-street my employers began to suspect the truth. Their solicitor made inquiries, and making the worst of my story, I received a letter from the firm, saying that Grumston, Foxley, and Grumston had no further need of my services. My brother-in-law called at their place of business, and tried to remonstrate with old Foxley, the managing partner; but he would listen to nothing, and curtly said, that as it was one of the rules of the house that any one who got into difficulties should be dismissed, they had already filled up my place. As I had now nothing to offer my creditors and no place to lose, I had but to file my petition as a bankrupt. I sent for a solicitor, and my papers were made out.

According to that most extraordinary collection of anomalies which we call the laws of bankruptcy, any one who, when a prisoner for debt, files his petition as a bankrupt, must wait four full days, and give formal notice to his detaining creditor, before he can apply for his discharge from prison. Having fulfilled both these conditions, I went up—still in custody—before the Commissioners in Bankruptcy, and asked to be discharged from prison. The Commissioner looked over my papers, and his clerk

then asked, in a loud voice, whether any creditor "In re Smith" had any objection to my being discharged? Upon this a creditor rose and said, "I oppose the prisoner's discharge." The Commissioner at once told me that he must refuse me my liberty until the choice of assignees, which would take place in about a fortnight. My solicitor remonstrated, and told His Honour how I had already suffered the loss of my situation by imprisonment, and how I had repeatedly endeavoured to make a settlement with my creditors before filing my petition, to which I had been driven by the impossibility of paying them now that I had no salary to depend upon. The Commissioner said he was very sorry for me, but that any creditor had a legal right to oppose my discharge without assigning any reason whatever for so doing. Thus I was remanded to prison for another fortnight.

Among other petty annoyances to which we were subjected at Whitecross-street, was that of being locked out from our sleeping-rooms from eight in the morning until seven at night, and thus never being able during the whole day to touch water, soap, or hairbrush. The sleeping-rooms consisted of a very large dreary cold barrack-room sort of place—only I should like to hear the indignant appeals which would be made in the House of Commons, could any barrack-room, or even criminal prison, half so bad be found within the limits of the kingdom—divided into so many bunks, or compartments, each one large enough to hold a very narrow small-sized bed. Although it was the midst of a very cold winter, and although these rooms never could be visited by the sun, there was no fire—not even a fireplace. Anything like the deadly cellar-like cold of this vile hole, I never felt in my life; although I had never been used to luxuries. The beds, from their size, must have been intended for thin schoolboys; from their hardness, for Trappist monks. The first night I lay wretchedly awake. Two very thin blankets were all between me and the cold that fearful long night. In the next bunk to me there was a Frenchman, who could hardly speak a word of English, and to whom I had been of some little use in interpreting during the day. Hearing me shivering with cold, he offered to lend me one of two railway-rugs he had brought with him. I never was so grateful for anything. I rolled myself round in the welcome rug, and towards morning dozed off, but only to be roused up by a man who cleaned the shoes, and did odd jobs about the place for the prisoners of the ward, calling out, "Half-past seven, gents; time to be up!"

There was in each bunk a small basin, in which even a limited wash of hands and face could not be accomplished without a great deal of difficulty. It was astonishing to observe how very soon the most clean and trim-looking among us became as careless and as dirty in their persons as the rest. Nor could it well be otherwise. Our hurried dressing complete, we had to move off into the general sitting-room—in appearance,

and compound smell of tobacco, beer, fried bacon, and salt fish, more like a thieves' kitchen in the slums of St. Giles's than any other place I ever was in. Here we found waiting for us a solid enough breakfast of fried bacon, eggs, bread, salt butter, and strong, if not good, tea. By nine o'clock this meal was over and cleared away, and from that time until ten the prisoners smoked, talked, played at backgammon, or otherwise amused themselves. There was an open court-yard, round and round which some of them walked, in pairs or alone. Any prisoner who had a solicitor could see him in what is called the Solicitor's-room—the only cheerful room in the whole building—and remain there talking with him as long as needful. But friends or relatives can only be seen in a dark and abominable place, with benches and tables set out like a very low tavern, and to which all females who come to see the prisoners must repair. I was so disgusted with much that I saw and heard in this place, that, after the first or second time she came, I forbade my wife returning again to see me. The choice of assignees in my bankruptcy would take place in about a fortnight, and I preferred waiting that time without seeing my wife, rather than allow her to come to such a place again.

At ten o'clock, strangers were allowed to enter. For such persons as lived in the far west of London, or in the suburbs, this hour was far too early, particularly in winter. At twelve, all strangers had to leave, but why or wherefore I never could make out. At two, they might return; but what could they do in the mean time? I have heard again and again of poor ladies whose husbands were in Whitecross-street having to walk the streets of that loathsome neighbourhood until the prison opened again at two, and then only to be turned out again at three.

Two was our dinner-hour. The plain food we got was good of its kind, and abundant in quantity. It would have been our own fault if it had been otherwise, for the prisoners of each ward elect from among themselves the person they deem most fitted to manage their affairs. In the ward where I was, there was a caterer who had to purchase and pay for everything, and to collect the subsistence money from the others. His accounts were overlooked daily by a committee, who checked every item. Nor was the living by any means expensive. We had a substantial breakfast, a good plain dinner, tea in the evening, and cold meat if we liked with the latter, for about two shillings a day; we were better fed than in Bream's-buildings for about a tenth of the sum we paid there. There were daily prayers said in the chapel by the chaplain of the prison, but out of some two hundred prisoners not more than a dozen or so attended divine service. Even on Sunday there were never more than twenty or thirty present. There was a prevalent idea that the regulation forbidding visitors to come to the prison on Sundays—a then recent enactment—had been framed for

the purpose of obliging the debtors to go to church; and, John Bull like, they determined to show their independence of spiritual control by not attending church at all. Sunday was a very dreary day with us. The knowledge that on this day all our friends and relatives had plenty of leisure to come and see us, but that some cant on the part of the magistrates or City authorities prevented them, was enough to make us down-hearted; it was, in fact, a day that we all most cordially hated. I must add that the Pharisaical regulation falls much harder upon the working man than upon others. The wife of an artisan, journeyman, or labourer who is in prison for debt, has in most cases to support the family whilst her husband is shut up. The poor woman generally manages to scrape together a few shillings in the week (a bare subsistence for herself and children) by washing or going out as charwoman. To repair all the way to Whitecross-street on a week-day is to take so much out of her hard-earned wages, and to diminish the amount of food she can give her children. Surely there can be no sin in allowing her to see her husband on the Sunday. "Sunday used to be the pleasantest day we had, sir," said one of the warders to me; "it seemed to do the old place good—to be a bit of sunshine like—to see all the poor men's wives and their kids here for three or four hours. The prisoners used to rejoice when Sunday come round, and I have seen every mortal man amongst them as was a churchman, go to the morning service on that day just to thank God that they should see their folks again. But now they hate the day, and do nothing but grumble or cuss from the morning to the night. I don't see much good in that sort of thing, sir." Nor did I. Nor do I.

I had no notion, until I got into Whitecross-street, that although the large practitioner in a gentlemanly way who goes in for bankruptcy to the tune of five or six thousand pounds, or the Colossal Railway Contractor who does the same to the tune of perhaps a couple of millions, can, by means of the court, purge himself of all his liabilities, but the poor man, he whose debt is under twenty pounds, can by means of the County Court be shut up again and again for the same debt. When I was in Whitecross-street, a prisoner was brought in whom I had previously known. He had been a groom in a gentleman's family for many years, and, having saved a little money, married, and set up a small greengrocer's shop in the West-end. For some years, business had gone pretty well with him; but latterly his own sickness, and his wife's confinement at the same time, had thrown him behind the world. He owed a butcher nine pounds ten shillings and sixpence. After promising to pay five shillings a week towards clearing off the debt, and failing to observe the instalments, his creditor summoned him to the County Court. He pleaded poverty, and had asked leave to pay instalments of three shillings a week. The

judge ordered him to pay five shillings, and this he did for some four or five weeks. But more trouble came upon him. The wife died, and he had to put his three children out to board. He was unable to pay up his instalments, and was imprisoned, for what a pleasant legal fiction called Contempt of Court, for twenty days. As a matter of course, his business went altogether to the bad while he was in prison, and upon his being released he gave up his shop, not having the means of buying any goods. But his creditor complained again that he did not keep his terms, and he was a second time sentenced to twenty days' imprisonment for the same offence. At first I hardly believed this man's story. But I was set right by one of the Warders of the prison, who told me that the case was by no means uncommon, and that there often are on what is called the county side of the prison upwards of two hundred poor men—labourers, artisans, small shopkeepers, hawkers, pedlars, servants out of place, journeymen of various trades, and not a few gentlemen in bad circumstances—who are imprisoned for debts varying from a few shillings to twenty pounds, and who are all liable to be—and very many are—imprisoned again and again for the same debt. For them there is no Bankruptcy Court, nor does any amount of imprisonment clear them.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

TRAFALGAR.

IN 1803, Napoleon, having secured the alliance of Spain, ran his sword through the Treaty of Amiens, and war then broke out between England and France. Lord Nelson was appointed commander of the Mediterranean fleet, and for fourteen months blockaded the harbour of Toulon, watchful as a cat for a mouse. On the 18th of January, while the English were anchored off Sardinia, the French fleet slipped off to sea, but Nelson was upon their track the instant the news reached him.

Although only forty-six years of age, Nelson was already a shattered man. Fragile, thin, and sickly, weakened by ague in childhood, beaten down by fever in the East Indies, almost killed by dysentery at Honduras, always sick at sea, an eye lost at Corsica, an arm at Cadiz, cut about the head at the battle of the Nile, struck in the side in another engagement, his cough dangerous, he scarcely hoped to fight more than one more battle. Yet his heart was sound as ever, and the unquenchable lion spirit glowed within him, in spite of all vexatious disappointments, the French reluctance to a fair open sea-fight, and all the mean Admiralty intrigues, shuffles, and ingritudes. "My own fleet," said the sea hero, in his own fervid way, "is well officered and well manned, would to God the ships were half as good!" The ships were, in fact, scarcely fit to sustain the alternate fretfulness and violence of that stormy winter in the Mediterranean. "The French fleet," he wrote

home, "is in high feather, and as fine as paint can make them; but our weather-beaten ships, I have no fear, will make their sides like a plum-pudding, and some day we shall lay salt upon their tails."

The pursuit was tedious and baffling—between Biche and Sardinia; to Naples, then quick to snap them off Egypt; then a sweep across the channel between Sardinia and Barbary; next frigates discharged like rockets at Gibraltar and Lisbon; after this a dash to Barbadoes, and back home again, seivered, chafed, and vexed; then on to Cadiz, a sweep across the Bay of Biscay, a cruise towards Ireland, a visit to Cornwallis at Ushant, and lastly a desponding and angry return to Portsmouth. The sailors, who loved "Nel," and vowed that he was "brave as a lion and gentle as a lamb," shared in the regret and vexation of their commander. A great opportunity of glory had been lost; above all, a chance of thrashing the French. "I would not," he once wrote to Mr. Elliot, the minister at Naples, "upon any consideration have a Frenchman in the fleet except as a prisoner; they are all alike. Not a Frenchman comes here. Forgive me, but my mother hated the French." That was the clue to the prejudice which was part of Nelson's blood and of his brain. Admiral Latouche had boasted that he had once chased Nelson; our hero kept the letter containing the boast, and swore if he ever took the writer, he should eat it. He was never cruel to Frenchmen, yet his advice to his midshipmen, to whom he was always gentle as a father, was:

"Hate all Frenchmen as you do the devil;

"Obey orders without questioning;

"Treat every one, who hates your king, as your enemy."

At Portsmouth, Nelson learned that Sir Robert Calder had fallen in with the French fleet off Finisterre, and had only scratched them when he ought to have run his cutlass through their hearts. The Victory unloaded, Nelson, embowered down at ever-pleasant Merton, making hay, watching sheep, catching trout in the winding Wandle, idolising Lady Hamilton, that beautiful but wanton woman, forgot ambition, and grew more intent on rick awnings than French canvas. One daybreak, Captain Blackwood brought word that the French had refitted at Vigo and got into Cadiz. Nelson paced "the quarter-deck" walk in his garden restlessly. He pretended to be indifferent, and quoted a playful proverb: "Let the man trudge it, who's lost his budget." He was happy, and his health was better: "He wouldn't give sixpence to call the king his uncle." Lady Hamilton knew the heart of the brave man she loved, and pressed him to go. The French fleet was his property; it was the reward of his two years' watching. He would be miserable if any one else had it. "Nelson, offer your services." The tears came into his eyes at her heroism. At half-past ten that night he started in a post-chaise for London. His diary for that day lays bare his heart before us:

"Friday night (Sept. 13), at half-past ten," he

says, "I drove from dear, dear Merton; where I left all which I hold dear in this world, to go to serve my king and country. May the great God, whom I adore, enable me to fulfil the expectations of my country! and, if it is His good pleasure that I should return, my thanks will never cease being offered up to the throne of His mercy. If it is his good providence to cut short my days upon earth, I bow with the greatest submission; relying that he will protect those so dear to me, whom I may leave behind! His will be done. Amen! Amen! Amen!"

The probability of his death had entered his mind, that is evident; presentiments are never anything, after all, but such probabilities.

The embarkation of Nelson at Portsmouth was a scene worthy of Grecian history. Although he tried to steal secretly to his ship, crowds collected, eager to see the face of the hero they venerated. Many of the rugged sailors were in tears; old men-of-war's-men knelt and prayed God to bless him as he passed to the boat. They knew he was the sailor's friend and father; they knew him to be as humane as he was fearless, unselfish, and eager to pour out his blood for England. No basely-earned money had defiled his hands; his heart was pure crystal; it had no flaw. As Southey says finely, "Nelson had served his country with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his strength, and therefore they loved him as truly and fervently as he had loved England." That one-eyed, one-armed, shrunken invalid officer, was still the tower and the bulwark of his native land.

On arriving at Cadiz, Nelson took all an old sportsman's precautions not to flurly the game he had been so long stalking. The French wanted encouraging. They were shy. Nelson kept his arrival as secret as possible. The Gibraltar Gazette did not publish the number of his vessels. He kept fifty miles to the west of Cadiz, near Cape St. Mary; for it has been often observed, rats won't bolt when terriers are too near the holes. He instantly seized all the Danish vessels carrying provisions to Cadiz for the French fleet. His final stratagem was the bait that at last drew forth the enemy. He detached some vessels on an imaginary service, knowing that fresh ships were almost daily arriving for him from England. This brought out Villeneuve at last, although he had just declared in a council of war that he would not stir from Cadiz till his fleet was one-third stronger than the English.

Nelson still wanted frigates, "the eyes of the fleet," as he always called them; moreover, he dreaded the junction of the Carthagenian fleet on the one side, and of the Brest squadron on the other. Yet at this crisis, with only twenty-three English ships to face thirty-three French, his great heart and romantic chivalrous nature roused him to an act of the utmost generosity. Sir Robert Calder had to go back to England to be tried by court-martial for his behaviour in the last action off Finisterre. Sir Robert was one of Nelson's few enemies,

and he therefore treated him with the most considerate respect. He wished him to share in the glory of the coming battle, but Sir Robert being eager for his justification, Nelson sent him home in his own ninety-gun ship, which could ill be spared. This was chivalry carried almost too far for the national good.

On the 9th, Nelson had written to his favourite officer, the brave and simple-hearted Collingwood, enclosing him his plan of attack, wishing to give full scope to his captain's judgment in carrying out his intentions.

"My dear Coll," he said, in his hearty way, "we can have no little jealousies. We have only one great object in view, that of annihilating our enemies, and getting a glorious peace for our country. No man has more confidence in another than I have in you; and no man will render your services more justice than your very old friend, NELSON AND BRONTE."

The order of attack was grand in its simplicity. The true sea-warrior instinct and experience had struck out a plan as admirable as if it had been forged by the brain of a Newton. The fleet was to move in two lines, and like two swift sword-fish pierce into the enemy; it was to be preceded by an advanced squadron of eight of the swiftest two-deckers. Collingwood was to chop the enemy in two about the twelfth vertebra from the tail ship. Nelson himself was to give the coup de grace at the centre—the heart—whilst the advanced squadron was to cut off about three or four from where he would break through. In this way the assailants would always be one-fourth superior to those portions they broke off. There was professional genius in these well-aimed blows.

Nothing was sham, mysterious, nor inflated about his directions. His "precise object" was a close and decisive action; therefore, "if signals were not seen or clearly understood, no captain would do wrong," he said, "if he placed his ship alongside that of an enemy." One of his last orders was that the name and family of every man killed or wounded in the action should be, as soon as possible, returned to him, to transmit to the Patriotic Fund.

About half-past nine on the morning of the 19th, the Mars, the nearest of the line of scout-ships, repeated the signal that the enemy was at last stealing out of port. The wind was light, with partial breezes. Nelson instantly gave the signal for a chase in the south-east quarter. About two, the repeating ships announced the French fleet at sea. The next day, seeing nothing, and the wind blowing fresh from the south-west, Nelson began to fear the French had run back to shelter. A little before sunset, however, Blackwood, in the Euryalus, reported that the French were still pressing westward, and that way Nelson had determined they should not go but over his sunken fleet. Still, however, thinking they were inclined to run for Cadiz, Nelson kept warily off that night.

At daybreak, the French fleet of thirty-three sail of the line, and seven large frigates, formed a crescent, in close line of battle, off Cape Trafal-

gar, near the southernmost point of Andalusia. They were on the starboard tack, about twelve miles to leeward, and standing to the south. Eighteen of the enemy were French, and fifteen Spanish. Nelson had twenty-seven sail of the line, and four frigates. The French vessels were larger and heavier than ours, and they had on board four thousand skilled troops, and many dreaded and extremely skilful Tyrolese riflemen.

Soon after daylight, Nelson was on deck, eagerly eyeing the French crescent. He had on his admiral's frock-coat—his "fighting coat," as he called it—which he had worn in many victories; but he did not put on the sword which his uncle, Captain Suckling, had used, when, on that very day many years before, he had beaten off a French squadron. Nelson had wished this day to be the day of battle, and had even half superstitiously expected the coincidence. He wore, as usual, on his left breast, four stars of various orders of knighthood, one of them being the Order of the Bath, which he specially valued as the personal and free gift of the king. Dr. Scott, the chaplain, Mr. Scott, Lord Nelson's public secretary, and Mr. Beatty, the surgeon, trembled when he thus made himself a conspicuous mark for the enemy by these decorations. "In honour," he had exclaimed on a former similar occasion, "I gained them (the orders), and in honour I will die with them." Other captains had been more prudent, others equally reckless. Captain Rotherham, of the Royal Sovereign, had been warned not to wear his large gold-laced cocked-hat. "Let me alone," said the old bull-dog, testily; "I have always fought in my cocked-hat, and I always shall." And so in his cocked-hat he paced the deck and went into action. Collingwood, that brave Newcastle man, could be brave and prudent too. He ordered his lieutenant (Clavell) to pull off his boots and put on silk stockings, as he himself had done. "For," said he, "if we should get a shot in the leg, it would be more manageable for the surgeon." He was also very particular that his boatswain bent all the old sails, to save the newer canvas.

The blue liquid battle-plain was ready for the fight. There was no need of digging graves in that vast cemetery. Europe and Africa were watching the combatants. Already the shot was piled, and the powder passed up from the magazines. The sailors stood laughing by their guns, thinking what a fine sight the captured French vessels would make at Spithead. The men that in half an hour would be stretched dead and mangled on the red and splintered planks, were busy getting their tompons and fire-buckets and cartridges ready, or lashing cutlasses round the masts ready to hand. As the men were clearing Nelson's cabin and removing any bulkheads that were still left, they had to displace the picture of Lady Hamilton—that high-spirited and beautiful woman, originally a maid-servant, then an artist's model, who had obtained so extraordinary a hold over Nelson's mind—the admiral called out to the men, anxiously:

"Take care of my guardian angel!"

This picture (probably by Romney) was at once his idol and talisman. He also wore a miniature of Lady Hamilton next his heart.

Nelson seldom began a battle without a prayer. He had always a profound sense of God's omnipotence and omniscience. He now retired to his cabin, and wrote a simple but fervid prayer. He annexed to this prayer in his diary a sort of will—his last request to his country in case he fell, as he seems to have expected to do. It was headed: "October 21, 1805.—Then in sight of the combined fleets of France and Spain, distant about ten miles."

He recommended Lady Hamilton to his country for her great services to the nation. 1. For obtaining, in 1796, the letter from the King of Spain to the King of Naples, announcing his intention of declaring war against England, which had given to Sir John Jervis an opportunity of striking a first blow, which, however, he did not do. 2. For using her influence with the Queen of Naples to allow the fleet to be victualled at Syracuse, which enabled it to return to Egypt and destroy the French fleet at the battle of the Nile. He also left to the beneficence of his country his adopted daughter, Horatia Nelson Thompson (and gloriously a grateful nation—i.e. ministry—attended to this last request). This adopted daughter, really his own, was then five years old, and Nelson's last moments at Merton had been passed in praying over her as she lay asleep in her little bed. The singular document ended thus:

"These are the only favours I ask of my king and country, at this moment when I am going to fight their battle. May God bless my king and country, and all those I hold dear! My relations it is needless to mention; they will, of course, be amply provided for."

Blackwood and Hardy were the witnesses.

The wind was now from the west, light breezes with a long heavy swell. Blackwood, who came on board the Victory at about six o'clock, found Nelson in good spirits, but grave and calm, and not in that glow and exultation which he had shown before Aboukir and Copenhagen. He had already expressed his belief that the French would make a dead set at the Victory. The French had now tacked to the northward, and, to Nelson's great regret, formed their line on the larboard tack, thereby bringing the shoals of Trafalgar and St. Pedro under the British lee, and leaving the port of Cadiz open for themselves. Nelson at once gave signal to prepare to anchor, and the necessity of this measure was strongly on his mind to the last. He told Blackwood to use the frigates as much as possible.

"I mean to-day," he said, "to bleed the captains of the frigates, as I shall keep you on board until the very last minute."

"During the five hours and a half," says Blackwood, "that I remained on board the Victory, in which I was not ten times from his side, he frequently asked me what I should consider as a victory? The certainty of which he

never for an instant seemed to doubt, although from the situation of the land he questioned the possibility of the subsequent preservation of the prizes. My answer was, 'That considering the handsome way in which the battle was offered to the enemy, their apparent determination for a fair trial of strength, and the proximity of the land, I thought if fourteen ships were captured it would be a glorious result.' To which he always replied, 'I shall not, Blackwood, be satisfied with anything short of twenty.' A telegraphic signal had been made by him to denote that he intended to break through the rear of the enemy's line, to prevent their getting into Cadiz. I was walking with him," continues Captain Blackwood, "on the poop, when he said, 'I'll now arouse the fleet with a signal;' and he asked if I did not think there was one yet wanting. I answered, that I thought the whole of the fleet seemed very clearly to understand what they were about, and to vie with each other who should first get nearest the Victory or Royal Sovereign. These words were scarcely uttered, when his last well-known signal was made, 'ENGLAND EXPECTS EVERY MAN WILL DO HIS DUTY.' The shout with which it was received throughout the fleet was truly sublime."

There has been a good deal of paltry discussion as to whether Nelson wrote or only modified this signal. It matters little; he sanctioned it, and it was that sanction alone that gave it immortality. The shout that welcomed it was like a roll of thunder, because the signal seemed like a voice from England and from home. It was an omen of victory.

About seven o'clock the French wore, and stood in a close line on the larboard tack towards Cadiz, the sun full upon their sails, their three-deckers rising from the water like floating cities. About ten, Nelson became anxious to close with the enemy.

"They put a good face on it," he said to Blackwood, "but I'll give them such a dressing as they never had."

"At this critical moment," says Blackwood, "I ventured to represent to his lordship the value of such a life as his, and particularly in the present battle, and I proposed hoisting his flag in the Euryalus, whence he could better see what was going on, as well as to what to order in case of necessity. But he would not hear of it, and gave as his reason the force of example; and probably he was right. My next object, therefore, was to endeavour to induce his lordship to allow the *Téméraire*, Neptune, and Leviathan to lead into action before the Victory, which then was headmost. After much conversation, in which I ventured to give it as the joint opinion of Captain Hardy and myself how advantageous it would be to the fleet for his lordship to keep as long as possible out of the battle, he at length consented to allow the *Téméraire*, which was then sailing abreast of the Victory, to go ahead, and hailed Captain E. Harvey, to say such were his intentions if the *Téméraire* could pass the Victory. Captain

Harvey being rather out of hail, his lordship sent me to communicate his wishes, which I did, when, on returning to the Victory, I found him doing all he could rather to increase than diminish sail, so that the *Téméraire* could not pass the Victory; consequently, when they came within gun-shot of the enemy, Captain Harvey, finding his efforts ineffectual, was obliged to take his station astern of the admiral."

Nelson then went over the different decks, where the men stood grouped in eights round their favourite guns. He spoke to them in his own kind and pleasant way, and saw that the preparations were everywhere complete. As he ascended the quarter-deck ladder it was as if he ascended to a throne, and the men greeted him with three cheers.

The French fleet, commanded by Admiral Villeneuve in the *Bucentaur*, included Nelson's old antagonist, the *Santissima Trinidad* (of one hundred and forty guns), two vessels of one hundred and twelve guns, one of one hundred, six of eighty-four and eighty, the rest being seventy-fours of a large class, together with seven frigates of heavy metal, forty-four and forty guns each, besides other smaller vessels. The Spaniards were commanded by Admiral Gravina, who had under him Vice-Admiral Don J. d'Aliva and Rear-Admiral Don B. M. Cisneros. Villeneuve had under him Rear-Admirals Dumanoir and Moyon. Four thousand troops were embarked on board the fleet under the command of General Contarini in the *Bucentaur*, amongst whom were several of the most skilful sharpshooters that could be selected, and many Tyrolese riflemen. Various sorts of combustibles and fire-balls were also embarked. The Spaniards appeared with their heads to the northward, and formed their line of battle with great closeness and correctness; and as the mode of attack by Nelson was unusual, so the structure of their line was new. It formed a crescent convexing to leeward, and Admiral Collingwood, in leading down to the centre, had both the van and rear of the enemy abaft his beam. They were formed in a double line thus:

1 2 3
 4 5 6

French and Spaniards alternately, and it was their intention, on our breaking the line astern of No. 4 (which manœuvre they expected we should, as usual, put into execution), for No. 2 to make sail; that the British ship in hauling up should fall on board of her, whilst No. 5 should bear up and take her, and No. 1 bring her broadside to bear on her starboard bow. This manœuvre only succeeded with the *Tonnant* and *Bellerophon*, which were amongst the ships that suffered most. Before their fire, therefore, opened, every alternate ship was about a cable's length to windward of her second ahead and astern, forming a kind of double line, and appeared, when on their beams, to leave a very little interval between them, and this without crowding their ships. Admiral Villeneuve was on board the *Bucentaur*, eighty guns, in the

centre, and the Prince of Asturias bore Gravina's flag in the rear.

Collingwood led our lee line of thirteen ships. Nelson, the weaker line of fourteen. Nelson steered two points more to the north than Collingwood, in order to cut off the enemy's retreat towards Cadiz. The lee line, therefore, was first engaged. Villeneuve was desperate; he had resolved to fight against the wish of the Spaniards, partly because he thought that Nelson had not arrived, and because he knew that Napoleon, furious at his poor success with Sir Robert Calder, had already sent M. Rosaly to supersede him. His crews were in a feverish clamour of bragging excitement, every one shouting at the same time, as usual with the Gaul at moments of danger.

Nelson's eyes brightened with delight when he saw Collingwood, in the *Royal Sovereign*, go straight as an arrow at the centre of the enemy's line, chop it through astern of the *Santa Anna*, a three-decker (112), then open fire and engage that vessel at the muzzle of her guns on the starboard side.

"See!" he cried, "see how that noble fellow, Collingwood, carries his ship into action."

Collingwood at the same moment looked back exultingly at the Victory, and said to his captain (Rotherham of the cocked-hat): "Rotherham, what would not Nelson give to be here?" Only the day before, Nelson had reconciled Collingwood and Rotherham. Saying, "Look! yonder are the enemy," made them shake hands.

Villeneuve was watching the English advance from amid a group of his moustachioed and chattering officers; the English came on gay and confident as boys starting for cricket.

"Nothing," he said, "but victory can attend such gallant conduct." At half-past eleven the French guns opened on the *Royal Sovereign*; as the Victory came sweeping down, the French ships ahead of her, and across her bows, at fifty minutes past eleven began to try the distance; they fired single guns. Perceiving a shot pass through her maintop gallant-sail, they opened a feu d'enfer, chiefly (as is their custom) at the rigging, to disable her before she could grapple. Nelson instantly ordered Blackwood and Captain Prowse, of the *Sirius*, to go on board their ships, and tell all the line-of-battle captains as they passed to disregard his plan of action if in any other way they could get quicker and closer alongside an enemy. "He then," Blackwood says, "again desired me to go away; and as we were standing on the front of the poop, I took his hand, and said, 'I trust, my lord, that on my return to the Victory, which will be as soon as possible, I shall find your lordship well, and in possession of twenty prizes.' On which he made this reply: 'God bless you, Blackwood; I shall never speak to you again.'"

The two columns, led on by their brave chiefs, continued to advance, with light airs and all sails set, towards the van and centre of the enemy, whose line extended about N.N.E. and S.S.W.

Nelson gave orders to hoist several flags on the Victory, for fear that a single one might be

shot away. The French, strangely enough, showed no colours till late in the action, when they required them as signals of striking. As usual, the English admiral had forbidden musketry in the tops, as he considered it a paltry mode of homicide, which might kill a commander, but could not decide a battle.

He than ran straight on the bows of the Santissima Trinidad, a monstrous four-decker, the ninth ship in the van of the French double crescent line; the Victory opened on her with her larboard guns at four minutes past twelve.

Meanwhile, Collingwood, having poured a deadly dose of a broadside and a half (full measure) into the stern of the Santa Anna, had jammed into the French ship, so that the yards of the two vessels were locked together. His hands were soon full, for the Fougueux came malignantly on his lee quarter, and three more of the enemy's French ships soon bore on the bow of the Royal Sovereign. The Victory, silent and stern as if its crew were invulnerable, never fired a shot, but moved on, calm as Fate and irresistible as Death, till fifty of her men were struck down, thirty wounded, and her main-topmast, with all her studding-sails and booms, shot away. Nelson said that, in all his battles, he had never seen men so cool and resolute as his. At length the simple word was given, and the Victory spoke at last, vomiting out spouts of fire, and belching her winged thunder to the right and to the left.

It was not possible to break the enemy's line without running on board one of their ships: Hardy informed the admiral, of this, and asked him which he would prefer. Nelson replied: "Take your choice, Hardy; it does not signify much." The master was ordered to put the helm to port, and the Victory ran on board the Redoubtable, just as her tiller-ropes were shot away. The French ship received her with a broadside; then instantly let down her lower-deck ports, for fear of being boarded through them, and never afterwards fired a great gun during the action. Her tops, like those of all the enemy's ships, were filled with riflemen.

A few minutes after this proof of distrust, Captain Harvey, in the *Téméraire*, also fell on board the Redoubtable, and the *Téméraire* had also an enemy on her side, so that the four vessels now lay in a compact tier, their heads in one way as if in dock; but Nelson soon pounded her antagonist deaf and dumb, passed astern of the *Bucentaur*, hauled in on her starboard side, pouring in a slaughtering broadside in passing, then stood for that floating mountain, the *Santissima*, playing her larboard guns with incredible rapidity on both the *Bucentaur* and the *Santissima*, while the starboard guns of her middle and lower decks were steadily devoted to that rather tough antagonist the Redoubtable. It became necessary for the Victory to fire at the Redoubtable with depressed guns, three shots each, and with reduced charges of powder, for fear of the shot passing through the Frenchman and injuring the *Téméraire*. The guns of her lower deck touched the Redoubtable's side; so, for

fear of the Frenchman catching fire and destroying both vessels, the fireman of each gun stood ready with a bucket full of water, which he immediately dashed into the hole made by the English shot.

The remaining ships of Nelson's column, after the *Téméraire*, which pressed forward to his support, were the *Neptune*, T. F. Fremantle; *Conqueror*, Israel Pellew; *Leviathan*, H. W. Boyntoun; *Ajax*, Lieutenant J. Pilfold; *Orion*, Edward Codrington; *Agamemnon*, Sir Edward Berry; *Minotaur*, C. I. M. Mansfield; *Spartite*, Sir F. Laforey; *Britannia*, Rear-Admiral Earl of Northesk, Captain Charles Bullen; *Africa*, Henry Digby. Owing to the judicious mode of attack which Nelson had adopted, his fast-sailing ships, like sharpshooters in an army, had half joined the battle before the slow-sailing ones came up fresh and vigorous to their support, and, as a corps of reserve, helped the better to determine the day.

The Victory was fighting hard amid a ceaseless blaze of flame. Luckily, the French were not such good seamen as Nelson, and, in consequence of keeping the wind nearly on their beam, lay in a deep trough of the sea, and rolled so heavily that their broadsides sometimes flew over and sometimes fell short of our ships. Still a raking fire swept the Victory's decks.

Mr. Scott, the admiral's secretary, was killed by one of the first cannon-balls, whilst in conversation with Captain Hardy, and near to Lord Nelson. Captain Adair, of the Marines, who soon afterwards fell, immediately endeavoured to remove the mangled body, but it had already attracted the notice of the admiral.

"Is that poor Scott," said he, "who is gone?"

Presently, whilst Nelson was conversing with Captain Hardy on the quarter-deck, during the shower of musket-balls and raking fire that was kept up by the enemy, a double-headed shot came across the poop and killed eight of the marines. Captain Adair was then directed by Nelson to disperse his men more round the ship. A few minutes afterwards a shot struck the fore-brace bits on the quarter-deck, and, passing between Lord Nelson and Captain Hardy, drove some splinters from the bits around them, bruised Captain Hardy's foot, and tore off his shoe-buckle. They mutually looked at each other, and Nelson, whom no danger could affect, smiled and said:

"This is too warm work, Hardy, to last!"

This was the climax of the battle. Our brawny sailors, stripped to the waist, their huge cable pigtails dangling at their backs, their skins black with powder or smeared with blood, were running out the guns, loading savagely, and firing fast as the wadded shot could be driven in. The captains were bellowing through their speaking-trumpets, the gunners' boys running to and from the magazines through showers of shot and splinters; the midshipmen firing at the enemy's tops with all the glee of schoolboys out at their first partridge shooting. The musketeers in the Redout-

able's tops fired especially sharply whenever the smoke-cloud rolled away from the Victory, and there came a glint of the epaulets of our officers. In the French mizen-top there was a keen-eyed Tyrolese, in glazed cocked-hat and white frock, especially active. He was a fellow who, after hours of crag-climbing, had known a week's food and profit depend on the one shot at a steinbock, and he did not throw away his cartridges.

At fifteen minutes past one, a quarter of an hour before the Redoubtable struck, Lord Nelson and Captain Hardy were walking near the middle of the quarter-deck; the admiral had just commended the manner in which one of the ships near him was fought. Captain Hardy advanced from him to give some necessary directions, Nelson was near the hatchway, in the act of turning, with his face towards the stern, when a musket-ball struck the admiral on the left shoulder, and entering the epaulet, passed through his spine, and lodged in the muscles of his back, towards the right side. He instantly fell with his face on the deck, in the very place that was covered with the blood of his secretary, Mr. Scott. Captain Hardy, on turning round, saw to his horror the sergeant of marines, Secker, with two marines raising Nelson from the deck.

"Hardy," said his lordship, "I believe they have done it at last; my backbone is shot through."

Some of the crew bore the admiral down to the cockpit, several wounded officers and about forty men being carried below at the same time, amongst whom were Lieutenant Rann and Mr. Whipple, captain's clerk, both of whom died soon afterwards. Whilst the seamen were conveying Lord Nelson down the ladder from the middle deck, he observed, careless of his own sufferings, that the tiller-ropes had not been replaced, and desired one of the midshipmen to remind Captain Hardy of it, and to request that new ones should be immediately rove. He then covered his face and stars with his handkerchief, that he might be less observed by his men. He was met at the foot of the cockpit ladder by Mr. Walter Burke, the purser, a relation of the great orator, who, with the assistance of a marine supporting his legs, with some difficulty conveyed him over the bodies of the wounded and dying men—for the cockpit was extremely crowded—and placed him on a pallet in the midshipmen's berth, on the larboard side. Surgeon (afterwards Sir William) Beatty was then called, and very soon afterwards the Rev. Mr. Scott. His lordship's clothes were taken off, that the direction of the ball might be the better ascertained.

"You can be of no use to me, Beatty," said Lord Nelson; "go and attend to those whose lives can be preserved."

When the surgeon had executed his melancholy office, and found the wound to be mortal, he repressed the general feeling that prevailed. He had again been urged by the admiral to go and attend to his other duties, and he reluctantly obeyed, but continued to return at

intervals. As the blood flowed internally from the wound, the lower cavity of the chest gradually filled; Lord Nelson, therefore, constantly desired Burke to raise him, and, complaining of an excessive thirst, was fanned and supplied by Scott with lemonade. In this state of suffering he anxiously inquired for Captain Hardy, to know whether the annihilation of the enemy might be depended on; but it was upwards of an hour before that officer could, at so critical a moment, leave the deck; and Lord Nelson became apprehensive that his brave associate was dead. The crew of the Victory were now heard to cheer, and he anxiously demanded the cause, when Lieutenant Pasco, who lay wounded near him, said that one of the opponents had struck. A gleam of joy at each shout lighted up the countenance of Nelson, and as the crew repeated their cheers, and marked the progress of his victory and more captures, his satisfaction visibly increased.

At half-past two the Santa Anna struck to Collingwood. When the Spanish captain came on the deck of the Royal Sovereign, he asked the name of the conquering vessel. When they told him, he patted one of the guns with his hand, and said, smilingly:

"I think she ought to be called the Royal Devil."

The Bellerophon had also done well. At half-past twelve she had broke through the enemy's line, astern of the Spanish two-decker Monaca. She engaged her at the muzzles of her guns, blew up her hanging-magazine, and captured her. She then ran on board of L'Aigle, a vessel crowded with troops. The tremendous fire soon left only fifteen of our men alive on the quarter-deck; but the fire from our lower-deck drove the French from their guns, and L'Aigle soon afterwards struck to the Defiance. The lower-deck men had chalked on their guns, as their motto, the words, "Victory or death." The Bellerophon was three times set on fire, and three times the fire was put out, quietly, and without fuss or excitement. A captain of the marines, on his way to the cockpit to have his arm amputated, had apologised to Lieutenant Cumby for quitting the deck "for so trivial an occasion."

The Spaniards had fought well, but they, too, now gave way. The Argonauta and Bahama had each lost four hundred men, the St. Juan Nepomuceno three hundred and fifty. The men of the Santissima, unable to endure our fire, leaped overboard, and were helped into the Victory. The crews of five of the French ships, fought by us muzzle to muzzle, had shut their lower-deck ports, and deserted their guns.

In the mean time, Nelson lay in agony and in great anxiety about the action. He kept saying: "Will no one bring Hardy to me? He must be killed; I am certain that he is dead."

Mr. Bulky, the captain's aide-de-camp, then came below, and, in a low voice, communicated to the surgeon the particular circumstances respecting the fleet which had detained Captain Hardy, but promised that he would take the first moment that offered to leave the deck.

The excessive heat of the cockpit, from the number of the dead and wounded, increased the faintness of the dying admiral, and his sight now became dim.

"Who brought the message?" he said, feebly.

"Bulkily, my lord," replied Burke.

"It is his voice," said Nelson. "Remember me, Bulkily, to your father."

Captain Hardy came down from the deck in about fifty minutes, and anxiously strove to conceal his feelings. The friends shook hands in silence. Nelson spoke first:

"Well, Hardy, how goes the day with us?"

"Very well. Ten ships, my lord, have struck."

"But none of ours, I hope?"

"There is no fear of that, my lord. Five of their van have tacked, and show an intention of bearing down upon us; but I have called some of our fresh ships round the Victory, and have no doubt of giving them a drubbing."

Having said this, he found himself unable any longer to suppress his tears, and he hurried away.

The firing continued, and the cheering of the men was occasionally heard amidst its repeated peals. With a wish to support his spirits, that were in some degree shaken by having seen the friend he so sincerely regarded, and from the increased pain, the agonies of excessive thirst, and the great difficulty of respiration, Burke said:

"I still hope, my lord, you will carry this glorious news home."

"Don't talk nonsense," replied the admiral.

"One would, indeed, like to live a little longer; but I know it to be impossible. God's will be done. I have performed my duty, and I devoutly thank Him for it. A wounded seaman was lying near him on a pallet, waiting for amputation, and, in the bustle that prevailed, was hurt by some person passing by. Nelson, weak as he was, indignantly turned his head, and, with his usual authority, rebuked the man for not having more humanity. Some time afterwards, he was again visited by the surgeon.

"You know I am gone—I feel it. I find," said he, "something rising in my breast, which tells me" (putting his hand on his left side) "I shall soon be gone. God be praised that I have done my duty. My pain is so severe that I devoutly wish to be released. Yet," said he, in a lower voice, "one would like to live a little longer, too!" And after a few minutes, in the same under tone, he added, "What would become of poor Lady Hamilton, if she knew my situation?"

A spirited, fierce, rapid fire had been kept up from the Victory's starboard guns on the Redoubtable for about fifteen minutes after Lord Nelson was wounded; in which time Captain Adair and about eighteen seamen and marines were killed, and Lieutenant Bligh, Mr. Palmer, midshipman, and twenty seamen and marines were wounded, by the enemy's musketry alone. The Redoubtable had been twice on fire in her fore-chains and on the fore-castle, and, by throwing some combustibles, had set fire to the Victory's boom; the alarm was given, and it reached the cockpit; yet neither hurry nor tre-

pidation appeared, and the crew having put out the flames, immediately turned their attention to the Redoubtable, and rendered her all the assistance in their power. On the colours of that ship being struck—twenty minutes after Nelson fell—and there being no possibility of boarding her, from the state of ruin of both ships, the great space between the two gangways, and the closing of the enemy's ports, some seamen immediately volunteered their services to Lieutenant Quillam to jump overboard, and, by swimming under the bows of the Redoubtable, to endeavour to secure the prize. But Captain Hardy thought the lives of such men too valuable to be risked by so desperate an attempt. When the firing from the Victory had in some measure ceased, and the glorious results of the day were accomplished, Captain Hardy immediately visited the dying chief, and reported that fourteen or fifteen vessels had already struck.

"That's well!" cried Nelson, exultingly; "but I bargained for *twenty*." Then, in a louder and stronger voice, he said, "God be praised, Hardy; bring the fleet to an anchor."

Captain Hardy hinted at the command devolving on Admiral Collingwood. Nelson replied, somewhat indignantly:

"Not whilst I live, I hope, Hardy!" vainly endeavouring at the moment to raise himself on his pallet. "Do you," said he, "bring the fleet to anchor."

Captain Hardy was returning to the deck, when the admiral called him back, and begged him to come nearer. Lord Nelson then delivered his last injunctions, which were, that his hair might be cut off and given to Lady Hamilton, and that his body might not be thrown overboard, but be carried home to be buried, unless his sovereign should otherwise desire, by the bones of his father and mother.

"Take care of my dear Lady Hamilton, Hardy; take care of poor Lady Hamilton."

He then took Captain Hardy by the hand, and observing that he would most probably not see him again alive, the dying hero desired his bosom associate to kiss him. He did so on the cheek. He stood for a few minutes in silent agony, then, kneeling down, he kissed his dying friend's forehead.

"Who is that?" said the hero.

"It is Hardy, my lord."

"God bless you, Hardy!" replied Nelson, feebly.

Hardy then left him for ever. Nelson afterwards said:

"I wish he had not left the deck; I shall soon be gone."

Death was rapidly approaching. He said to the chaplain, "Doctor, I have not been a great sinner." And, after a short pause, "Remember that I leave Lady Hamilton and my daughter Horatia as a legacy to my country."

His voice then gradually became inarticulate, with an evident increase of pain; when, after a feeble struggle, these last words were distinctly heard:

"I have done my duty; I praise God for it."

Having said this, the hero turned his face towards Burke, on whose arm he had been supported, and expired without a groan at thirty minutes after four, three hours and a quarter after he had been struck. Within a quarter of an hour of his going below there were only two Frenchmen left alive on the mizen-top of the Redoubtable. One of them was the Tyrolese who killed Nelson. An old quartermaster recognised his hat and white frock.

This quartermaster and two midshipmen, Mr. Collingwood and Mr. Pollard, were the only persons left in the Victory's poop;—the two midshipmen kept firing at the top, and he supplied them with cartridges. One of the Frenchmen, attempting to make his escape down the rigging, was shot by Mr. Pollard, and fell on the poop. But the old quartermaster, as he cried out, "That's he—that's he," and pointed at the other, who was coming forward to fire again, received a shot in his mouth, and fell dead. Both the midshipmen then fired at the same time, and the fellow dropped in the top. When they took possession of the prize, they went into the mizen-top, and found him dead; with one ball through his head, and another through his breast.

The last guns fired on the cowed and flying enemy were heard a minute or two before Nelson's great heart ceased to beat. They were his triumphant knell. Rear-Admiral Duma-noir, with four of the van, fired, as they passed, into the Victory, the Royal Sovereign, and the captured Spanish vessels, to the indignation of their vanquished allies. But the fugitives were unlucky, for Sir Richard Strachan bagged them all soon after.

Our loss in this great and crowning battle was one thousand five hundred and eighty-seven men. Twenty of the enemy's ships struck, but only four were saved. A strong gale coming on that night from the south-west, Collingwood found it impossible to anchor. The Spanish vice-admiral, Aliva, died of his wounds. Ville-neuve was sent back to France, and dreading a court-martial, destroyed himself on the road to Paris.

At home the greatness of the victory seemed to be forgotten in the greatness of the nation's sorrow. England now felt what a hero she had bred. Not the poorest man in the country but felt the loss as if his father had died. The national gratitude surged over. Nelson's brother was made an earl, with a grant of six thousand pounds a year; ten thousand pounds were voted to each of his sisters; and one hundred thousand pounds granted for the purchase of an estate. A public funeral was decreed, and a public monument in St. Paul's. The leaden coffin, in which he was brought home, was cut into reliefs. As he was lowered into the vault of St. Paul's Cathedral, the sailors, as if by agreement, tore the flag that covered his coffin into strips, to keep till their dying day, and then leave their children as heirlooms and incitements to glory.

Nor was brave Collingwood forgotten. He was made a baron, and had a pension of two thousand pounds for his life, with an annuity

after his death of one thousand pounds to his wife, and five hundred pounds to his two daughters. Two days after the battle of Austerlitz the dead body of Nelson arrived off Portsmouth. Austerlitz was a great blow, but it did not make up for Trafalgar. The body of Nelson lay in state at Greenwich on January 5, on the 8th it was taken to the Admiralty, and on the 9th was interred in St. Paul's, the Prince of Wales being present, and ten thousand soldiers of the line. Thirty-four years before, a thin sickly boy, the son of a Norfolk clergyman, had joined his uncle's ship the *Raisonnable*, of sixty-four guns; this same boy, afterwards the bulwark of England, was now laid in his sumptuous grave, and upon his grave fell the tears of a grateful and sorrow-stricken nation. Our hearts of oak may turn to iron, our rough sailors to dexterous engineers, but will the memory of Nelson ever be forgotten while the blue sea girdles the chalk ramparts of Old England?

OYSTER NURSERIES.

WHAT has happened to all the oysters? Who sends us now that welcome barrel of rich sea "marrows" at Christmas-time? The oyster-devouring population has indeed increased, but an enormous addition to the price has lessened popular consumption. Some physiologist, with a wise shake of the head, tells us that "the oyster-pest has done it." An influenza, perhaps, infected the silvery-spats, and wrested from the floating globules their filmy lives. A sort of shell-measles was suggested, and for a year or two people paid, though with a growl or two, as much for half a dozen oysters as for two dozen in better times. At last the general conviction seems to be that the oyster dearth is the result of an exceedingly rapid consumption. Still, essays are occasionally written to prove that that abominable dog-fish—mouching congers, crabs, and even whelks—had acquired quite a human appetite for oysters, and swallowed down the young spat in myriads. One dreadful gourmand has been specially stigmatised. The cruel dog-whelk, or "Piercer," is branded as the greatest destroyer of myriads. He ought to be good eating himself, he is so tasty in his own food. The piercers swarm up like locusts in the spring, and are wondrously prolific. They are regularly hatched from nests; each nest contains about eight hundred eggs, and every egg has forty infant demons softly nestled in tiny cists. These spring quickly to maturity, and set to work at boring. With an organ wonderfully adapted for the purpose, they drill a hole in the shell of the young oysters, and suck out their luscious lives. A legion of crabs follows in the wake of the whelk, and these prick out and clear away the remnants of the murdered bi-valves. At Lahlillon, near the Ile des Oiseaux, there are four men who live in a boat which floats over the famous breeding-beds below. The duty of these four men is to watch the line of march taken by the army of piercers. As the boat sleeps in its

own shadow on the unruffled surface, they see the young spat floating above the seaweed like white spangles, and then descending to its resting-place. Next a thin white line of whelks advances, and the young oyster is slain. They gather these whelks at low spring tides, and M. Comte, chief of the ostracultural department, records that one man has been known to gather fourteen thousand whelks in two hours.

But man and his cupidity are the great destroyers. Dredgers on public beds crane up multitudes, regardless of the future. "After me, the deluge," is practically the motto of every oyster dredger. Oysters are dear in Paris; they are dear in London. We must make hay while the sun shines. Oysters may fall in price next year; who knows? Then where shall we be? So they dredge and dredge until scarce an oyster is left to breed. On the great Black-water Bank, which is public property, and open to the fishing vessels of the whole empire, the dredgers worked all through the month of May this year. The once rich beds in the Solent are cleared out. Carlingford is no longer famous for its small but luscious oysters. Man has fished until there is no more fish to be obtained. Gastronomists feelingly appeal to science, and ask is salmon always to cost two shillings a pound and oysters eighteen-pence the dozen?

A poor French stonemason, named Bœuf, working on the rocks of the Ile de Ré, set up, to while away the time, the first artificial bed for rearing oysters. He closed in roughly a little breadth of foreshore, and managed his silent broods well, because he imitated Nature as he had seen her working among the rocks and slob. Bœuf enjoyed many a savoury treat, and then made money. Others, too, found it profitable to close in narrow strips of beach, throw down a few broken tiles and sticks, plant a hundred or two oysters, and let them fatten while men worked or slept. Then M. Comte set about rearing the creatures scientifically. Some attempts failed, others were successful; but amongst the French oyster nurseries that one which is now most celebrated is the oyster garden of Lahillon, close to the Ile des Oiseaux.

On the first of June, 1860, there was not an oyster to be found at Lahillon, the voracious "Piercer" having killed them all. Not even a spat could be discovered. The bottom was covered with mud eighteen inches deep, and over that lay a mass of matted weeds. M. Comte and his assistants set vigorously to work dredging out all the mud and weeds until they reached the sandy level of the basin. A large plateau of brown sand, of cockle, clam, and oyster-shells was exposed. But M. Comte would not trust his baby oysters without cradles, to the mercy of the sea. He put down glazed, vitrified, and porous tiles, in the shape of an arc of a circle. Seven thousand five hundred of these tiles were carefully built up in two hundred and seventy piles, so arranged that the tide water flowed through them freely. The bottom was laid out as neatly and regularly as a garden. One hundred acres were divided into two compartments by a long gravelled walk,

eight feet wide, running from end to end. Narrower paths branch off from this at right angles to the right and left. These paths are only two feet wide, and the beds between them six feet, so that the arms of the "weeder" can gather the "piercers." The beds are regularly dressed and cleaned, and the rock and tile-work kept in the neatest order. At first, four hundred thousand full-grown oysters, taken from the coasts of England, Ireland, and France, were carefully laid down. Then four hundred thousand deep-sea oysters, admirable for pickling, were dredged from the waters of the Ile de Ré and packed amongst the tiles. The four men in the boat saw clouds of spawn rising and falling in thin spirals from these all through the months of June, July, August, September, and even October. The cost of making this vast oyster-bed was one thousand one hundred and forty pounds; and in the year succeeding its construction the oysters raised from it produced eight thousand pounds: a respectable profit.

This success of the French naturally encouraged the preparation of oyster-grounds on the English coasts. That of Hayling is peculiarly interesting. Hayling Island lies at the mouth of a large area of sea water, which runs in from the Solent by two narrow channels on either side of the island. The bottom at Hayling is formed of chalk and flint. There are ten thousand square acres available for oyster culture, and these will no doubt be rendered productive in time. Hayling was known as an oyster fishery as early as the reign of Henry the Second, when the fishery was valued at eight shillings and eightpence, annually paid to the royal treasury. The oysters from the natural beds were so famous for their flavour, that they were soon dredged out.

In 1865, forty acres were prepared for the reception of spawn, and "to sow" with spat about two acres. An old salt factory, known as "the Salters," was included, and, in the reservoir which formerly supplied the works with sea water, the company determined to make their first oyster nursery. In June, 1866, only one acre in a pond of four acres' extent was thoroughly shingled and culched. Eighty large hurdles, such as are used for folding sheep, were fixed, and the oysters were laid down for breeding. The shingle is laid in patches or in strips, so that the natural mud surface may yield the nourishment supposed by many to be necessary for the nurture of the brood. The hurdles are fixed by stakes at some distance from the bottom over the oysters, but parallel with the bottom. It is found that the spat as it rises from the parent oyster attaches itself to the under part of the hurdles, while the sediment of the water and various minute forms of confervæ settle upon the upper surfaces. In June last year the oysters showed symptoms of "sickness," and on the 15th of July following the whole of the under surfaces of the hurdles were covered as thickly as could be with spat.

And now some curious eccentricities of the young brood were noticed. Wherever the

rind of the twigs composing the hurdles was darkest in colour, there the oysters were invariably the thickest, but where the bark had been peeled off, or where the substance of the wood was exposed by the splitting of the sticks, there were no oysters to be found. The spat, filmy and unsubstantial as it is, seems to possess instinct to select one locality rather than another. They have floated away without attaching themselves through four trays or troughs connected by a pipe, and then clustered thickly on the sides of the fifth. In this, too, they have fastened themselves *above* the surface of the water along one side of the tray where they can only obtain moisture by capillary attraction. Though generally selecting positions where the water is calm and undisturbed, they are found thickly encrusted under the full weight and turmoil of the stream from a delivery-pipe. In hard frosts oysters die in thousands under ten or twelve feet depth of running water, yet the brood on the side of the tray, though literally frozen up in ice and crusted over by it, was not injured in the slightest degree.

The French Ministry of Marine grants to private individuals small areas of foreshore for the formation of artificial spawning-beds; desiring, as far as practicable, that every individual dwelling on the coast may, if he pleases, possess his own private oyster park. In the view of the French government large companies create monopolies, and, by means of their capital, are enabled to carry off the oysters from the natural beds wherever they may be found, to fatten them upon their own. Recent legislation in England encourages the formation of oyster nurseries by individuals as well as by companies. The management and control of the foreshores, or tidal waters between high and low water mark, have been transferred from the administration of the Woods and Forests to the Board of Trade. This board has refused several applications made by public companies, on the ground that the allotments sought were far too large, and the appropriation of so large an extent would be detrimental to public interests. On the other hand, they have uniformly granted limited areas to individual claimants. Owners of small tracts of shore, or tenants whose holdings border on the sea, may find most interesting amusement, and probably some profit, by forming miniature oyster-beds of their own. It is only necessary to clear from weeds some sandy or shelly nook among the rocks, to place half a dozen hurdles, which can be bought for sevenpence each, and to place under them three or four hundred oysters in the months of May or June. The results of such experiments might prove to be of national importance. Some years since the possessor of an oyster-bed could hardly be said to possess any protection for his property. If a thief were caught in the act of taking oysters from a bed, he was punished by fine or imprisonment; but if he managed to get clear off the bed, by merely five yards, no man had a right to question him, though he

were laden with oysters. But oyster-beds now are protected by law as strictly as game on an estate, and a delinquent must account for his possession of oysters as of partridges or pheasants. The immense extent of foreshore now unproductive, the beds of rivers, lakes in harbours, and lagoons of the sea, might all be made remunerative to the proprietors and advantageous to the public. Fishery science can hardly be considered to have advanced satisfactorily so long as oysters cannot be purchased for less than six pounds the bushel, and one shilling and eightpence the dozen.

THE SPIRIT OF FICTION.

SOME people have an extraordinary feeling in regard to works of fiction; they think it sinful either to write or to read them. Mr. Campbell, the celebrated collector of Caledonian Tales, testifies to the existence of this feeling on the part of certain travellers in Scotland with whom he became acquainted. He tells us that there are some "worthy pedagogues in the Highlands" who "object to old stories told by peasants, because they are *fictiona*, and not historically true." Mr. Campbell adds, "I have repeatedly met men who look on the telling of these tales as something almost wicked." He likewise remarks that something of the same sentiment arose in the mind of Herodotus when listening to the legends of Egypt. Nevertheless, Herodotus thought it not wrong to write them down, warning, however, his reader that he must determine for himself with respect to the credibility of what the historian had related. Many of these stories have become sacred traditions, and doubtless many of these fictions have been mistaken for facts. Not a few are supposed to belong to a pre-historic age. On all hands, a moral value, whether for good or evil, has been given to various myths of which the origin is unknown. The latest theory of them is, that they formed the oral literature of the Aryan race, who carried them into the various countries that they visited in their migrations, and that afterwards the traditions were spontaneously modified, so as to suit fresh persons, times, and places.

The study of these traditions is as entertaining as it is interesting and instructive. It is curious to find in a wild and simple Scotch or Norse tale what appears a repetition of some incident in Homer, or Hesiod, or Herodotus, but which really is due to some antecedent source, and subsequently became the common property of the Egyptian, the Greek, the Roman, the Norseman, and the Gael. But the variations are as remarkable as the resemblances, and frequently most amusing.

These objectors to tales of fiction and the traditions of the elders would seem not to be aware of the amount of both in what they deem genuine history; indeed, these old fables needed only an Herodotus or a Homer to become either history or epic poetry. The ballads of a previous period were worked up into the stories of

Greece and Rome; and it is only lately that Niebuhr and Grote have refunded them into legend. And the same thing is going on in the present day. In the course of about thirty years most things become mythical; fancies and feelings mingle in the records, and ideas are gradually substituted for facts. Many so-called histories of the past, like Hume's History of England, are little better than political theories; and that of the late Lord Macaulay is another example, only on the other side of the question. The tendency to this has, indeed, produced a natural reaction, and the State Paper Office is now under the process of being ransacked, in order to ascertain from actual data the precise statement of the facts as they actually occurred and were regularly documented. Unfortunately, however, these data themselves are infected with the prevailing disease, and myths are even to be found in figures of arithmetic, and in matters in which they would be little suspected. Wills, deeds, and letters are not always dated on the days on which they are written, executed, or transmitted; and individual observation varies so much in both minute and important particulars, that two witnesses to the same transaction will give a widely different account of it. Those who repeat it after them will modify it materially, and after a time will so vary their own version, that little consistency will be left between it and their first relation. Let history be written as it will, it can only be more or less the result of the process we have described; and however correctly compiled, it will inevitably be finally valued more for its ideas than for its facts. Anecdotes become parables, and, like fables, are cherished for their moral application; great events grow into sublime spiritual lessons, and allegorise themselves with a speed which is surprising even to those who have lived with them, and suffered from them. And in our days the process is even faster than in the past; and no sooner is the germ deposited than the development commences. To-day it is but a promise; to-morrow it is a fulfilment.

The spirit of fiction mingles with our daily life, and interferes in its most serious concerns. Each man, according to his natural disposition and acquired education, has a peculiar method of viewing and estimating occurrences, whether the latter be simple or complex—nay, he will make them one or the other according to his individual stand-point. Every age will have its special manner of judging of persons, motives, and events; and the intelligence of the present will decide very differently from that of the past on the very same class of events. What was formerly miracle is now but ordinary; the effect exciting no wonder, because the cause is no longer secret.

With these fictions of the past or present we are dealing, moreover, precisely in the same way in which our predecessors dealt with those of the dateless times, whose traditions they repeated, adopted, modified, or amalgamated. Each legend becomes infinitely multiplied as well as altered, so that it is with difficulty it

can be recognised in the variations which it has produced. Our burlesque and pantomime-opening writers have given themselves such outrageous licence in the treatment of mythology and nursery lore, that nothing remains the same except the name. The features of the portrait are changed in the most arbitrary way, yet we are expected to recognise the likeness. The simplicity of the subject is impaired by the blending of several fables in one composition; nevertheless, we are called on to accept the unity in the variety without question. The general resemblance becomes more slender with every experiment—the adaptation to extraneous purposes more and more violent—the numerous refinements of meaning, style, and incident, grow more and more daring and audacious—yet, albeit through repeated alterations the ship is scarcely the same in any portion, the demand exists that we should admit its identity. This curious development and multiplication of the products of imagination and memory threaten so to recast the entire written and unwritten literature of early ages, that at no distant period the form will undergo entire alteration. Much already has suffered a sea-change. Aladdin with his wonderful lamp, Pygmalion with his beautiful statue, Fatima with her mysterious husband, all alike are moulded into new shapes, and clothed with new robes that shine with a brilliance strange to these shadows of the past. Even the Polytechnic Institution, with its dissolving views and its optical illusions, innovates on the ancient formula, and sacrifices the accepted interpretations to scientific expediences.

Still the ancient spirit is not dead, and the influence of fiction is not confined to the past. The present is full of it. Never was there a time when novels and romances more abounded. These for the most part seek in the common and familiar life around us, rather than from ideal sources, for the materials of adventure. They aim, and properly, at the real, and great pains are taken, which only those who are practised in the art can adequately appreciate, to secure the correctness of the local colouring, and of the actual manners of the day. But in both there is a large amount of the fictitious. To different authors, according to their capacities and dispositions, the facts present a different appearance and receive a different interpretation. When transplanted to the story-book they are seen through an artificial medium, and are exaggerated or diminished according to the purpose intended and the form adopted. Mr. Wilkie Collins and Mr. George MacDonald would vary extremely in the treatment of similar characters and events; George Eliot and Mrs. Gaskell would make the most opposite use of the same materials. So with the poets, who deal with popular classes of subjects; a tale by Crabbe on the same theme would have differed widely from one by Wordsworth or Goethe. To say nothing of the philosophical fact that we are all partly creators of the objects we perceive, there are six or more ways at least in which different men can per-

ceive the same, according to the different relations in which they stand to them, and each reports his own peculiar experience from his own point of view. The results in consequence are extremely curious. Sir Walter Raleigh, in his *History of the World*, gives an instance. He states, that from a window of the Tower of London he looked upon a riot that was going on outside, and he was favourably situated to notice all that happened. But he found his account of the proceedings differed from that of the parties engaged in them, and that they differed in their statements from each other in the most important particulars. Greater differences still exist between the common observer and the writer of genius. The former accuses the latter of intentional exaggeration, substitution, addition, and has never been able in society to see the startling phenomena which he condemns in the romance as melodramatic and unnatural. The reason is, that such an individual has never developed the sense required for the seeing such things; and, because he is partially blind, he accuses his informant of wilful invention. Yet, every now and then, even the common-place mind is thrown off its balance by some patent revelation which none can ignore, and then is compelled to acknowledge in a phrase which has itself become common-place, that "Fact is stranger than fiction." Who thought, until yesterday, that we were living in a state of things such as the inquiries into the Sheffield trades' unions have brought to light? Had any novelist alluded to the system, or portrayed any of the assassins who took office under it, he certainly would have been accused of wilful untruthfulness. Falsehood and malice would have been charged upon him, and he would have reaped nothing but obloquy for his uncorroborated disclosures. We all recollect the assaults made upon Mr. Charles Reade for his exposure of the abuses of the madhouse institutions, and many readers are yet disposed to suspect exaggeration, when the probability is that worse horrors have been actually committed; but which, from their unfitness for a work of art, have never yet found their way into a novel of real life.

Whatever may be the amount of truth or fiction in such productions, the sum of the latter is sure to be increased in the inevitable transmutations which they are doomed to undergo. Modern romance, whether in verse or prose, is decreed, like the ancient nursery-lore, to become the subject of future dramas, both serious and burlesque. The authors of these will select from the incidents and characters, and substitute or add others, while impregnating the mass of the materials with a new idea, and thus giving a new life and meaning to the original tale. This, in time, will be accepted instead of the primary narrative, and be the ultimate popular form in which the argument will be received by the public mind; just in the same manner as Shakespeare's historical

plays stand, with many readers, for the history of England or of Rome. Those pedagogues of whom Mr. Campbell speaks will, of course, denounce the process as altogether wrong, and the indulgence of such a practice of story-telling, whether oral or written, as exceedingly wicked. The obvious reply is, that it is inevitable, and is what it is by reason of a law which can be no more resisted in the moral world than the laws of nature can be resisted in the physics. Facts, as they are called, from their very abundance, have to be refunded into the unity of the principle of which they are examples; and this, once declared, has a tendency to impersonation, and, after many days, will be found embodied in a single hero, whether in history, romance, or drama, in whom will be summed up the peculiarities of many individuals. This compound man will carry off the honours of their exploits. Thus the story of William Tell had many predecessors, in Danish and other literatures, in all of which the frantic father had to shoot the apple off from his son's head; but the fable settled itself at length in the person of the Swiss peasant, who suffered and triumphed in the cause of the country whose liberty he achieved. Tales of the kind have to travel through many phases of legend and ballad-mongering, until they arrive at a stage, and undergo that artistic treatment which renders them classical. From that moment they are fixed, and obtain such universal attention that it is impossible for any future embodiment to take their place. The ideal is satisfied, so far as it can be, and the general mind of humanity acquiesces in the conviction that the most appropriate form has been permanently given to a conception that had long struggled, in the world of thought, for adequate expression.

In this manner the entire world of history and fiction receives ultimate compression, and is parcelled off in brief products of genius which in the smallest compass represent the soul, spirit, and progress of ages. The individual is, in all these, sacrificed to the expediences of classical art. The historical Richard or Macbeth, whatever the most laborious researches may make either to be, avails little; the dramatic representation is the only real portrait acknowledged, and the poetic dominates the prosaic with a despotism that displaces the actual for the ideal, to which the man of genius has given form and clothing. The utility of the result is the sufficient justification of the method, which after all is natural, and not the invention of any individual. The instinct of the peasant is in this matter more true than the prejudice of the scholar; while the latter is barren of fruit, the former is full of entertainment, and offers a perpetual banquet at which all nations and peoples may feast in common.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER III. ALFRED TRESPCOTT PLAYS THE PATRON.

No such flourish of trumpets and tapping of kid-gloved hands as encouraged young Trescott heralded Mabel's first appearance in Dublin. She was announced simply as Miss M. A. Bell, from the Theatre Royal, Kilclare, and came out in no more prominent a character than that of Hero in Shakespeare's play of *Much Ado about Nothing*. But that first attempt was sufficient to convince Mr. Barker, the manager, that his new recruit was an acquisition of no common value. He at once engaged her for the season at the munificent salary of two guineas per week! Mabel was transported with joy and gratitude. The great news was written at once to Hazlehurst, and the proposal made that Dooley and her mother should come out and join Mabel at once. Mrs. Saxelby had already mentioned to her daughter that Job Smith, the man who attended to her garden, had made an offer to rent the cottage whenever she should be disposed to let it. There was a lodging to be had in the square in which Mrs. Walton lived that would suit Mabel and her mother and Dooley. Circumstances seemed for once to arrange themselves favourably; nothing was wanting but Mrs. Saxelby's consent to the scheme.

"Why, Mrs. Philip is sure not to hesitate, Mabel," said Aunt Mary, "so anxious as she must be to be with you again."

Mabel, however, did not feel quite so certain about the matter. She knew that the responsibility of making any business arrangement, even the getting rid of such scanty furniture as still belonged to her, would appear very terrible to her mother. "If I could be with mamma for a day or two, I dare say it would all be settled very soon," said Mabel. However, she encouraged herself to hope that Mrs. Saxelby would resolve to make the effort.

And now began for Mabel Earnshaw—alias Miss M. A. Bell—a period of hard, anxious, unremitting toil. Such persons as suppose a player's life to be one of idleness and self-indulgence, or those stage-struck heroes and heroines who

yearn for the theatre as an escape from such common-place elements of success in life as patience, industry, steadiness, and attention, would have been mightily astonished if the faithful record of the work that Mabel put into one week could have been brought under their notice.

Mr. Barker soon found his account in putting forward Miss M. A. Bell as much as possible. And this circumstance—although, of course, desirable for her professional advancement—had the disadvantage of bringing down upon her head a great deal of ill will and jealousy. With whatever outward serenity her proud self-command enabled her to bear it, this sometimes caused her very real pain. It was, too, unfortunate for Mabel that her two staunchest supporters were both peculiarly disliked by their comrades. These were old Jerry Shaw and Alfred Trescott. The former, indeed, was never popular with his fellow-actors, but was tolerated as a privileged person whose eccentricities were licensed by long custom, and who commanded a certain respect by his age and the rigid honesty of his character. But for Alfred Trescott there was but one feeling of distrust and dislike. The insolence of his temper, increased by prosperity to an intolerable and overbearing arrogance, was continually offending those around him to whom he could dare show his real nature; and as Lady Popham's patronage had filled his head with the most extravagant ideas of his own importance and the brilliant future that awaited him, he was careless whom he wounded, or whose animosity he excited amongst the people connected with the Dublin theatre. "What the devil do I care for these confounded show-folks?" he would say, in answer to any remonstrance from his father. "Do you suppose it matters one straw to me what *they* say or think? I don't believe, governor, that you quite understand or realise my position yet."

But though coarsely insolent to the rest of the performers, he made so great a difference in his manner to Mabel as to appear almost deferential by contrast. Her own occupations were so engrossing at this time, and the meditations of her few leisure moments so far removed from any considerations connected with Alfred Trescott, that it was long before she became sensible of the contrast that his behaviour to her presented with his usual demeanour. When she did become aware of it, far from deriving any gratifi-

cation from the fact of being singled out for this distinction, it caused her very great annoyance. Out of the theatre she did not see much of him. The promises he had made in the summer of coming to play for Mr. Earnshaw remained unfulfilled. He was so constantly occupied, he said, with preparations for his concert, and with hard practice; and John Earnshaw and his wife accepted these excuses as being perfectly natural and indeed inevitable. But there were several people in Dublin—the Honourable Arthur Skidley and Walter Charlewood among others—who could have accounted for a great many hours of Alfred Trescott's time, that were certainly neither devoted to study nor passed in attendance on Lady Popham.

Young Trescott, however, did call at Mrs. Walton's residence late in the afternoon of the day on which it had been decided in Merrion-square that Signor Carlo Bensa should be applied to, to conduct the concert. Alfred had told Lady Popham that he was acquainted with Signor Bensa, and would deliver the note to him. But, in truth, he did not accurately know Bensa's address, and had come to Mrs. Walton's house with the double purpose of obtaining the direction and of presenting himself in the character of patron, by skilfully conveying to the family the impression that it was owing to his suggestion that this piece of professional employment had been thrown in Bensa's way.

As Alfred approached the house in the half-built square where Mrs. Walton lived, he heard the clear penetrating tones of a silvery soprano voice ringing through the slightly-built dwelling, and on being shown into the sitting-room, found Carlo Bensa seated at the pianoforte, with Corda standing by his side, and singing a slow scale to his accompaniment. Mrs. Walton and her husband were listening with pleased faces, and Madame Bensa, seated on a low stool by the fire, was pretending to hush down her good-humoured crowing baby, who, holding on by its mother's forefinger, was displaying a pair of very plump mottled legs, partly clad in knitted woollen socks, and perseveringly executing a series of pawing steps with one foot, apparently under the impression that that was the ordinary method of locomotion.

"Oh, Alf dear!" cried Corda, when her brother opened the door. "Oh, Alf!" There was something affecting in the half-timid wholly loving action of the child as she ran up to her brother and took his hand. Alfred was by no means pleased to find her there at that moment, and his first impulse was to push her away impatiently; but, recollecting himself, he changed the movement into a sort of caress, and tapped Corda lightly on the shoulder.

"Signor Bensa," said he, after saluting the others, "you're the very man I wanted to see."

"Ah?" returned the Italian, with an interrogatory raising of his eyebrows and a slight inclination of his head.

"Yes; I came here, in fact, partly to inquire your address. I—I have a note for you."

Alfred found the performance of his new character of patron a little more difficult in practice than in theory. The very simplicity and unobtrusiveness that characterised the whole family made it difficult. However, he was not easily made bashful or embarrassed, and he put Lady Popham's note into Bensa's hands with a flourish.

"I told my lady that I would undertake to deliver it myself. My lady asked me to give you a message, but I thought it better that she should write. I mentioned to my lady that I thought you were the very man for her purpose."

Carlo Bensa read and understood English very well, but Lady Popham's cramped handwriting and peculiar orthography puzzled him. He handed the perfumed note to his wife, who, cutting short baby at the culminating moment when she had just made the discovery that the art of walking was performed by the alternate movement of both legs, and not by the persistent and consecutive pawings of one, whipped that sweetest-tempered of infants in a highly undignified bundle into her lap, and began to read attentively.

"Wants you to go to Merrion-square at two o'clock to-morrow, Charles. All very polite and civil. Can you manage it, dear?"

"Oh, certainly," said Bensa, after a little thought. "At two? Yes; I can go to miladi Popham at two." And the little man referred for a moment to a well-worn leather-bound note-book, containing the list of his engagements.

"You may see a former pupil of yours there," said Alfred, feeling that it might be well to mention it beforehand—"a Miss O'Brien."

"Meess O'Brien? Davvero? Yes. A very amiable young lady; but for singing—" The Italian made an indescribable gesture expressive of deep dejection, such as a Briton might have thought appropriate for the announcement of some dire misfortune; the death of a dear and valued friend, for instance.

"Ah, indeed!" rejoined Alfred, coolly. "Well, she is a charming girl, Signor Bensa, and a great—," he hesitated for a word, and finally brought out, "*friend* of yours. She agreed the moment I mentioned your name, and we persuaded Lady Popham to entrust the management of the affair to you. It's about my concert, you know."

"Ah, ah?" said Bensa, receiving the announcement with more self-possession than young Trescott could have desired. "Yes, ah, yes. We shall see, we shall see." And he made a memorandum of the appointment in his note-book.

"My dear Trescott," said Mr. Earnshaw, turning his sightless face in Alfred's direction, "we have been having a great deal of pleasure. Really a great deal. Charles has been trying Corda's voice, and speaks so highly of it. He says she ought to begin to study regularly at once."

"Umph!" said Alfred, rather sulkily, "I

don't know about that. There's plenty of time yet."

"I shall speak to Mr. Trescott, your father, myself," said Bensa, very quietly. "I have a little word to say to him about Corda."

The child's face was radiant with pleasure as she looked up at the singing-master, but it was obvious that her brother's unsympathising manner damped her; she watched him furtively, and stole up close to his side, and apart from the others, as though to disclaim any separation from him.

"I should like to learn, Alf, if papa liked—and you," she added, the last two words quickly and in an under tone.

Her brother did not answer her, but, turning to Mrs. Walton, said, with the faintest possible tinge of colour in his clear dark cheek, "Miss—Miss Mabel is not at home, I suppose?"

"Yes; but very busy. She has had to study four new parts this week, and a rehearsal every day. They don't let her be out of the bill one night. However, it's all for the best, of course. And she is so happy just now, expecting her mother and the little boy."

"Expecting Mrs. Saxelby?"

"Yes; that is to say, hoping that she will come out here. Nothing is settled yet, though."

"Good day, Mrs. Walton. Good day, sir. I must be going. I, too, am so busy just now, I don't know which way to turn. Put on your things, pussy-cat; I'm going home, and will take you with me." Alfred spoke hurriedly, and waited with an impatient frown and compressed lips whilst the child put on her shabby scanty mantle and hat.

"You must have a warmer winter cloak, Corda dear," said Polly, wrapping the child up with kind motherly fingers, and quietly slipping a little knitted shawl round her slender throat as she spoke. "I shall ask your papa to get you one, when I see him."

"Oh no, Madame Bensa, please. Indeed I—I don't want it; papa will be sure to buy me what I want, or—*or* Alfred," said the child, with a burning blush and a pained uneasy glance at her brother.

"Nonsense, Corda. Gentlemen never think of these things. I shall tell Mr. Trescott that you must be taken great care of, because Mr. Bensa says that you have quite a valuable little gold and diamond musical-box inside that small white throat of yours. There, give baby a kiss, and don't let her pull your curls out by the roots; she means it well, but I'm quite aware it is not agreeable, although she *is* my baby."

Alfred with difficulty repressed his ill humour and impatience until they had left the house; but the moment he got the child into the street he seized her hand roughly, and, pulling her along to keep pace with his rapid stride, said, with sudden harshness, "What the devil's the meaning of this singing foolery? How long has it been going on? Who began it? D—n it, can't you speak?"

It was, in truth, not easy for Corda to speak,

but she made shift to answer, breathlessly, "Please don't be angry, Alf. I didn't think it was wrong. Papa always said that I should learn singing some day, and Mr. Bensa said I had a good voice, and he made me sing the scales two or three times, and—and—oh, I *can't* go quite so fast, please, dear Alf."

He slackened his pace very slightly, still holding her by the wrist. "And when's this woman coming?" he asked, looking down at his sister with his sidelong glittering glance.

"What woman, Alf?"

"Confound it all, you can be sharp enough sometimes. Mabel's mother, Mrs. Saxelby. I suppose you hear all they say?"

"Oh, not directly, I think, Alf. But indeed I don't know any more than Mrs. Walton told you."

"You're a little humbug."

"Oh, Alf, I'm *not* a humbug; I'm not. And you know better, and it's cruel to say so."

"None of your cheek. I won't stand it. You learn nice behaviour at that house altogether. What do you mean by sneaking and whining to Madame Bensa that you haven't clothes to keep you warm?"

"Oh, Alf!"

"You do whine; and it's a nice reproach to your father, whom you say you're so fond of. And to *me*! But what do you care? So long as you can snivel and curry favour, no matter what impudence you subject us to, Yah! I'm disgusted with your selfishness."

He loosed her little gloveless hand as he spoke, and pushed her from him roughly.

"Oh, Alf! oh, Alf!" The cry seemed to come from the bottom of the little creature's heart, but she uttered no defence, and made no further answer; but as she pressed onward by his side, almost running to keep up with him as he strode recklessly through the crowded thoroughfares, the tears flowed unrestrainedly down the pale face, half hidden in the shadow of her shabby sunburnt hat.

CHAPTER IV. EVIL DAYS IN HAMMERHAM.

THE Hutchesins, in their kitchen in New Bridge-street, Mrs. Hatchett, in her genteel educational establishment at Eastfield, the Reverend Decimus Fluke, in the course of his busy round of daily occupations, the mild old clergyman, in his quiet study at Hazlehurst, even Job Smith, digging amongst the cabbages, had all heard rumours of money troubles and disaster impending over wealthy houses, and involving the ruin of poorer ones. Throughout Hammerham, and for miles around it, such rumours circulated.

In drawing-rooms, rich with gold and velvet; in dingy counting-houses whence the gold and velvet came; in marts where busy merchants met, and talked with bated breath and mysterious half-words and nods about the "ugly look of things over yonder;" behind long rows of factory-windows jarring and trembling to the whirr of the unresting wheels; in poor, brick-paved courts, where women clat-

tered in and out on iron pattens; amongst groups of navvies resting from their toil at mid-day beside yawning pits whose earthy bed revealed vast iron main-pipes for the conveyance of gas or water through the town; by spruce young clerks, and steady middle-aged cashiers; by doctors, lawyers, tradesmen, and servants—the failure of the great banking firm of Benett and Benett was discussed eagerly.

Benett and Benett were not Hammerham people; but they had a branch establishment in the great Midland town; and around the closed doors of this establishment little knots of people gathered and lingered, with a wistful interest in the barred window-shutters, and an insatiable curiosity about everybody who gained admittance into the silent house. Once or twice during the day succeeding the public announcement that Benett and Benett had stopped payment, a cab had dashed up to the closed door of the bank, a young man, carrying papers in his hand, had jumped out of the vehicle, and, after ringing at the bell, had been admitted, and the door again jealously closed behind him. This incident had been much relished at each time of its occurrence by the mob of idlers.

"It's young Charlewood," observed one.

"Ah, Gandry and Charlewood's eldest son," said another.

"Don't he look pale? I wonder if *they're* hit very bad!"

"Oh, not them! They're a long chalk too rich. It's the poor folks as suffers the most, allus."

"Very true, sir. Why, do you suppose now as Gandry and Charlewood—or Benett and Benett either, for that matter—'ll go without their glass of port wine at dinner to-day? Not a bit on it. Lord, they could swim in port wine, if they liked to it."

"Ah, and the poor working man helps to pay for it all," chimed in a lounging young fellow, who had passed the whole morning in a lethargy of idleness leaning against a post opposite the bank door.

It was a time altogether of gloom, oppression, and panic. There are many business-houses, stable and flourishing, among us at this day, the heads of which were racked with doubt and terror and uncertainty for weeks after the memorable failure of Benett and Benett. Hundreds were ruined irretrievably. The great house raised so dense a dust in falling, that it was not until the cloud had begun to clear off a little that it became possible to ascertain the extent of the ruins that had come crashing down with it. The shock paralysed all those who came within the region of its influence at first, and then there followed a confused *saue qui peut* scramble amidst the rubbish.

Day after day brought fresh tidings of disaster. Clement Charlewood had been but too correct in his previsions of wide-spread mischief. There was no time to look around for help, to prop the tottering fabrics, or even to depart from them unscathed. Shock suc-

ceeded shock, like those terrible South American earthquakes that lay waste wide cities in a few convulsive throes. Clement was indefatigable, energetic, thinking of everything, sparing his father as much as it was possible to spare him, shielding his mother and sister, as far as in him lay, from the wearing suspense and anxiety he was doomed to suffer himself. They knew that much was wrong, but they did not guess the extent of the mischief.

"If matters come to the worst, my mother and Penny will know it soon enough," he said to his father. "If Penny could *do* anything, I would advise you to be open with her at once; but as she would be powerless to help us in this matter, we may as well spare her as long as there is hope of our tiding over. But I would recommend that you write a line to Walter, giving him a hint that he may shortly have to retrench very greatly. He is thoughtless, and has got again into that set of Arthur Skidley's, and he has had one way and another very large sums of money from you lately."

"Poor Wat," groaned the father. "Poor Wat, poor Wat! It's so hard upon him."

"It isn't light upon any of us, sir."

"No; but Watty has such a spirit, and he's never been taught to know the value of money; and then he's got into such a high set. There never was such a boy for making high friends as Watty. You'll stand by your brother, Clem? You—you won't desert him?"

"Desert him, father?"

"No, no; I'm sure you never will, my lad. You'll do better for them all than—You'll remember what I say, Clem, and stand by your brother. Poor Watty! Such high friends as he'd made!"

In the midst of these anxieties, and of the overwhelming occupations that crowded upon him, Clement received the following note from Mrs. Saxelby:

"Dear Mr. Charlewood. It is so long since I have seen any of you, that I hesitated to write lest you should have forgotten my very existence. But I am so harassed, and so in want of a little advice and assistance, that, remembering your many former kindnesses, and your promises of continued friendship, I venture to ask you to spare me half an hour at the cottage to-day or to-morrow, and at any hour that may suit you. I am leaving Hazlehurst to join Mabel in Ireland. Dooley sends you his love.

"Yours always sincerely,

"CLARA SAXELBY."

"I hear rumours of great disasters in the business world. I trust they do not in any way affect you. "C. S."

The note was brought to Clement in the office, as he sat at his desk, heaped high with a mass of papers, and after a minute's consideration he hastily wrote a couple of lines, which ran thus:

"Dear Mrs. Saxelby. I will be with you at

eight o'clock this evening. I cannot command my hours, and that will be my only chance of seeing you.

"Yours always,
"C. C."

The day passed in unremitting anxious work on Clement's part. The afternoon post brought no relief to his mind. There came a telegraphic message from the north of England, importing that the strike amongst the railway navvies still continued, that hitherto no arrangement had been come to, and asking for instructions. If the matter were not speedily settled and the work resumed, it would be too late to fulfil the contract within the specified time. Blow followed blow, until Clement felt stunned and dizzy.

"What does my father say, Stephens?" he asked.

"I can't get anything out of the governor, Mr. Clem," replied the old clerk, gloomily shaking his head. "I don't like the look of the governor, sir, at all. He's hit very hard, indeed, is the governor. In seven-and-twenty years, Mr. Clem, since before you were born, I've never seen the governor anything like he is now."

"If there were but myself to bear it," muttered Clement, passing his hand wearily over his hot brow, "I should wish that the worst would come without more delay." He remembered the words afterwards with a sickening pang, to think how little he anticipated what that "worst" would be.

After dinner that evening, Clement left the drawing-room, and was putting on his great-coat in the hall, when Penelope ran down-stairs and beckoned him into a small sitting-room that opened opposite to the dining-room.

"I want to speak to you, Clem," she said, in a whisper. "Come here one moment. Where's papa?"

"I left him in the dining-room. He seemed to be asleep."

Penelope opened the dining-room door very softly and looked in. Then she shut it again as softly, and came and stood beside her brother.

"He is sitting quite still, with his head leaning on his hands," she said; "but I don't think he is asleep. The decanter by his elbow is nearly empty. Oh, Clem, tell me truly, what is the matter? I am not weak; I am not a child. I will do whatever you request, but don't, for Heaven's sake, keep me in the dark."

"Penny," said her brother, taking her hand, "things are very bad with us. This smash of Benett and Benett seems to have been but the beginning of the end."

"Is it ruin, Clem?" she asked, keeping her eyes steadily on his face.

"Not yet. It may be that we shall weather the storm. But from day to day, from hour to hour, there is no certainty. That is the truth as far as I know it myself. These days, since Benett's went, have seemed to me like years."

She put her hand upon his arm. "Clement, you are not going out again to-night?"

"I must go. I have promised. I will be back by ten o'clock."

Still she held him. "I—I wish you need not go," she said. "I feel so depressed, so nervous. Not like me, is it? But I have an unaccountable dread upon me that I cannot describe."

"The natural result of all this strain and suspense, my poor girl. You must be your own brave self, Penny, for my mother's sake."

Penelope Charlewood shook her head and shoulders as one who throws off a weight.

"There isn't trouble enough for you, Clem," she said, with a momentary spark of her old keen spirit in her eyes, "not worry, not anxiety enough for you, but I must make a fool of myself. If it was of any use to say, 'Forgive me,' I'd say it. But it isn't. All I can do is to conduct myself with as much of your patient courage as I can imitate. God bless you, Clem. You're the best son, the dearest brother, the truest—there, there. I'm not going to make an idiot of myself. I shall be up when you come home, but I'll try and get mamma to go to bed."

She dashed the tears from her eyes with the gesture of one who was ashamed of their being seen there, and with a parting pressure of her brother's hand, ran swiftly up-stairs again.

Clement found Mrs. Saxelby awaiting him in the well-known little parlour. The floor was strewn with a litter of straw and torn scraps of paper. A half-packed trunk stood open in one corner of the room, and though the main articles of furniture remained, such small objects of ornament as had survived the old days at Jessamine Cottage were gone.

"Dear Mr. Charlewood," cried the widow, taking his hand, "it is good of you to come to me. I began to fear I should not see you again before I went away."

"You are going immediately?"

"Yes; I did not quite know how soon, when I wrote that note to you yesterday. But I have made up my mind to start to-morrow morning, having heard that by so doing I shall be able to leave Liverpool by the boat that Captain Duff commands. He took Mabel over, and was very kind to her, and it will be a great comfort for me to be in his care. Good Heavens!" she added, in a startled tone, as the light fell fully on Clement's face, "what is the matter? How shockingly ill you look!"

"I am not ill, only harassed. But never mind me now. You sent for me to help you in some way. What can I do for you?"

Then Mrs. Saxelby explained that she had made up her mind to let the cottage, furnished as it was, to Job Smith the gardener and his wife. They had the chance of letting two rooms to a permanent lodger, and were steady respectable people. They would purchase the furniture at a valuation. The old clergyman of Hazlehurst had been very kind, and had helped her. But there were two or three matters as

to which she desired to consult Clement. "About those shares in the Gas Company, you know; and as to a suitable person to receive the rent for me," said Mrs. Saxelby. "I had half a mind to ask Mr. Charlewood to allow one of his clerks to look after it for me. But I didn't know. My late husband's other executor, Mr. Fluke, wouldn't have anything to say to me now, I suppose. All his family so strongly disapprove of poor Mabel's going on the stage."

Then Clement asked her a few questions relative to her money affairs, and promised to see about a proper person whom she could empower to receive her rent from Job Smith.

"I am glad," he said, with a deep sigh, "that you are going to be with Miss Earnshaw. Have you—have you good news of her?"

"Excellent news, thank you. I begin to think, after all, Mr. Charlewood, that Mabel was right in acting as she has done. Right, at all events, in leaving Eastfield. The life there was killing her."

"I must be going, Mrs. Saxelby. I would not have come out at this late hour, but that it was, as I told you in my note, my only chance of seeing you. Give Dooley my love, please."

"You send no message to Mabel then, Mr. Charlewood? Might not you and she be good friends again *now*?"

The "now" referred in Mrs. Saxelby's mind to Clement's supposed engagement to Miss O'Brien.

"If Miss Earnshaw would care to have me recalled to her remembrance, and to know that I—I—Good-bye, Mrs. Saxelby. Think of me as one who will always be willing to serve you and stand by you as a friend, as long as it may be in his power to do so."

"God bless you, Clement. I am very grateful for your kindness, and I wish you every—every happiness."

"Thank you. I must learn to be content with less than that."

"Must you? I believe there are few people with brighter chances of happiness than Clement Charlewood. But at this moment you are looking harassed and ill. Business troubles, I suppose? I hear of them on all hands."

"Good-bye, Mrs. Saxelby."

"Good-bye, Mr. Charlewood."

Clement had driven to Hazlehurst in a cab, but had dismissed the driver, meaning to return on foot. When he had gone some distance along the straight road, he stopped and turned, fixing his eyes upon the light in the cottage parlour, that shone clear and bright through the darkness. He stood and watched it for some minutes, heedless of the cold penetrating rain that had begun to fall. All at once the steady light moved and disappeared, then shone again for a moment out of an upper window, and then was seen no more. Clement turned resolutely towards the dull flare upon the night sky, that was reflected from the great factory fires and household lights of Hammerham, and with a

long heavy sigh that came labouring from his breast, walked through the black dreary weather towards his home.

SNAKES IN QUEENSLAND.

OF the many species of snakes that infest this distant colony, there are but few intensely venomous, but the individuals of these few species are extremely numerous. The Brown Snake, the Whip Snake, the Diamond Snake, and the Black Snake, are frequently found, especially in the Mitchell district.

A curious circumstance that occurred last year to a friend of mine, a Mitchell squatter, a gentleman of clear honour, and consequently of indisputable credibility. He accompanied me last May when I was out with my men "examining" and surveying his "runs," which were situated on a splendidly-watered creek, the resort (as I soon found to my sorrow) of a tribe of murderous black fellows.

"I had camped* just here, where we now are," said my friend R., "and towards morning I had a nasty dream. I dreamed that I saw a brown snake coming over from *that* direction (pointing to the north), and soon felt it crawling over my bare feet. Guess my surprise, on awakening, to feel a snake actually winding itself between my feet! I was lying on a blanket, with another blanket over me. Remember, I was on my back, and my feet were a few inches apart. Well; this snake first passed over my left foot, then round the sole of my right foot, tickling it horribly. After a pause, it glided over the right foot and round the sole of the other, after which it kept 'dabbing' at both soles, perhaps catching flies, until the titillation almost drove me mad. At length I mustered courage to raise my head and give a 'Hist' when it quietly slipped away."

I have generally found among my men a belief that the whip snake can jump *forward*. One of my men told me that he came suddenly on one of these virulent little beasts one day, that it immediately sprang at him as high as his breast, and that but for a very active spring on his part it would have "cooked" him. He then picked up a piece of stick, just in time; for it made spring number two, and he met it by a blow that knocked it to the ground with a broken back.

The whip snake is a most courageous and vindictive little wretch. I was one day in a boat on the river Logan, when I spied one swimming, and directed one of my men to hit it with his oar. He made a blow at it, but missed. The creature instantly turned and came stem on towards the boat. I made several blows at it with a whip-handle, but the water broke their strength, and the reptile could easily have got away; on it came, however, vindictively hissing, until its back was broken by a lucky stroke.

* Let the reader remember that "camping" means in Australia taking up one's sleeping-place for the night, even on the ground, with or without tents.

In the Mitchell district, the year before last, I had turned in about ten o'clock at night, and lay busily planning out the programme of my future campaign in the far west, not far from Burke and Wills's tract, when all at once, as I turned on my side, I felt a snake underneath the blanket on which I lay, and close to my shoulder. I felt it, through the blanket, gently with my hand. There was no doubt of the fact; there it was, and what was to be done! After much reflection I thought it best to lie still, as, from my weight on the edges of the blanket, it could do no harm until morning, whereas, if I stirred, it would probably have a fair chance at me. So I lay still and slept heartily till after sunrise, when I discovered that the supposed snake was the thong of a stock-whip which my son had deposited there for safety.

Soon after I was sent to the Logan, I was returning one afternoon late to my camp, which was in a place very difficult to find even by daylight, but next to impossible in darkness. I was pushing on my horse as rapidly as the thick timber would allow, when I saw an enormous black snake a little to the left of my track. The light was fast failing, and, although I make it a matter of conscience to kill every snake I can, I determined to pass him. To my astonishment, however (I had never seen the like before), the beast made right towards me with a wicked hiss. This was more than I could bear, so I got off my horse, determined to "wipe him out." I don't think I ever had such difficulty in killing a snake, and was never in such danger—save once, which I will speak of in due course. I selected a piece of wood, and made furious whacks at him, which were unsuccessful. The stick broke in two, but my blood was up; so, fearing that he would escape, I went very close to him to give him a finisher. Before I could do so, he turned with wonderful quickness and seized me by the arm, hanging on to the bite in such a venomously tenacious way that I knew he had emitted his poison. When I felt the puncture I grew reckless, and seized him with both hands, fortunately near the neck, and destroyed him. I brought him to my camp, tying him with a saddle-strap to the D-hook of the saddle, skinned him that evening, and found in him thirteen eggs as large as those of pullets. He was the largest black snake I ever saw—upwards of six feet. I experienced no ill effects, as he had not drawn blood, but had only given me a sharp pinch through my thick coat.

An Irish peasant had settled on the Logan river, having with great industry cleared some hundreds of acres. He had three children, the youngest of whom was about four years old, and one of the loveliest little girls I ever saw. I used often to alight and kiss the little creature, she looked so rosy and fresh, and was kept so clean and tidy. One morning she was romping with her brother near the hut. All at once the latter rushed in:

"Oh, mother, mother, Nelly's been bitten by a snake!"

It was too true. The marks of the reptile's fangs were visible on the instep. They hurried her within doors, and sucked the wound, but the stupor of death lay heavy on her. There was no medicine for many a mile, and no doctor. They walked her about, as long as the little limbs could stir, but at last they laid her down, and, after one wild recognising flash from her glazing eye into her mother's face, and with a shuddering sob, the spirit of poor little Nelly passed away.

On the Saturday succeeding this event the government surveyor, who with his staff was camped about seven miles from me, was returning on foot to his camp accompanied by his chairman. They were walking through long grass, when on a sudden the chairman cried out:

"My God, sir, I'm bitten by something!"

"Run on to camp, then," said my friend. "Fly, and I'll be after you with all the speed I can. Scarify the place when you reach the camp."

I saw the government surveyor next day, and he assured me that even as he spoke he saw the man's eye glazing. When he arrived, he found that the poor fellow had scarified his own leg, but was dying fast. Two days before this, the surveyor had been in Brisbane, and had been entrusted with a bottle of excellent cognac for me. A shower of rain had prevented its transmission from his camp to mine, and he now poured brandy down the throat of the dying man. The poor fellow was almost a teetotaler, and yet the bottle of brandy had no more effect than so much water. Meanwhile, the surveyor despatched a man on a fleet horse to a neighbouring station for more spirits, and, by the time the brandy was exhausted, the messenger arrived with a case-bottle of gin. In a few minutes the patient began to show some liveliness, and to talk with vivacity; but not until he had taken the last drop of the gin did he exhibit the slightest sign of inebriation. The instant that he *did* show signs of it, the surveyor felt that he was saved. The surveyor acted nobly. For a whole hour he persisted in sucking the wound of this poor man, whose leg was not over-clean. When next day I saw the patient, he had quite recovered.

The very best thing in the world for snake bites is strong liquor ammoniac applied to the wound, and a dilution of the same taken internally. Next to this is a thorough internal saturation by ardent spirits.

A medical gentleman, in conjunction with myself, made experiments of the effects of snake bites on rabbits. One rabbit, a magnificent specimen, ate heartily after being bitten by a diamond snake. We began to think that the reptile must have expended his venom before the trial, when all at once the rabbit, which was eating a lettuce, uttered a squeak, and fell dead without a quiver. This was about ten minutes after the bite.

A friend of mine put a whip-snake into a bottle, buried it between three and four feet in the earth, and kept it there undisturbed during

the winter months. When spring was well advanced he took it out, uncorked the bottle, and the beast, which had appeared to be dormant, sprang up at him with such speed that he had a very narrow escape.

The carpet-snake of Queensland is a species of boa, and is venomless. I ought to know this well, for about five years ago I was skinning a monstrous one which I thought dead, when it fastened upon my fingers, and bit me very severely in three places, drawing blood copiously. I shall never forget the looks of my men, and their rapid production of any amount of knives to cut off the finger on the spot. I laughed at their dolorous appearance, wrapped my hand in a handkerchief, and finished the operation of skinning, to their utter amazement.* Nothing can persuade even the most experienced bushmen that *any* snake can be harmless.

About four years ago I witnessed a battle-royal between my son and a carpet-snake. Both showed great determination. My boy was only twelve years old; but he was more than a match for the snake, so I would not interfere. He had picked up a short stick, and after combating for about a quarter of an hour, he succeeded in breaking the brute's back, and thus rendered it an easy prey. It measured eleven feet two inches. A very large opossum was found in its stomach, and in a perfect state of preservation. The last snake-fight I had took place a short time since in the bed of a dry creek that runs into the Thomson river. I was riding along carelessly, when all at once I saw an enormous brown snake wriggling between my horse's legs. Now the brown snake is a thing of horror, so I tried to back my horse with all my strength, but the attempt was useless, so I gave him the spur, and he went over it. I then dismounted, seized a stick which broke at the first blow, and by this time the snake was ascending the steep bank. He was on the point of getting away, when I made a fiercer blow with the fragment that remained in my hand, and broke his back, but it was near the tail, and the beast was able to turn round and make almost a vertical blow at me from above. I don't think I ever in my life experienced such a feeling of alarm as I did during the half second of its approach. I remember seeing its devilish head level with my face, and I remember striking out with my stick, but how I escaped I know not to this hour; however, when my staff came up they found me skinning it. I never saw a larger brown snake; it measured more than six feet in length, but in girth it was immense.

A great deal has been said of the instinctive dread of snakes which is exhibited by four-footed animals. This does not accord with my experience, as I know of dogs and cats having a great liking for killing them; and I have never yet had a horse that showed the slightest alarm even while quite close to them. Once my favourite saddle-horse actually "squashed" a

large black snake which was lying coiled up on a road, and I did not know it until I had got a yard or two beyond the spot.

It is impossible for a stranger to pronounce upon every snake he may come across; still, it may be useful to give a few hints which can be fully understood by every one. Whenever you see a snake *with a neck*, that is, with a hollow behind the head on both sides, and, combined with this, a thin tapering tail, be assured that snake is non-venomous; but when you see a snake with no neck, and, combined with this, a stumpy tail, that snake is in the highest degree venomous.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

SHERIDAN'S DUELS WITH CAPTAIN MATHEWS.

In the year 1771, Miss Linley, the daughter of a musical composer of that day, as famed for her beauty as for her singing, was the delight of Bath. Dr. Burney, Johnson's friend, has left us a formal eulogy of her fine soprano voice and of the exquisite spontaneousness with which she sang, not merely those simple ballads which were the taste of an age that peculiarly affected simplicity, but also the intuitive taste and precision with which she gave the most difficult passages of Handel and of our best old English church music. Of that "nest of nightingales," as Dr. Burney prettily calls the Linley family, Miss Elizabeth Linley, then eighteen, was the queen-bird. Although she had appeared at concerts and oratorios ever since the age of twelve, "The Maid of Bath," as she was generally called in the Crescent, the Pump-room, and in Sidney-gardens, had an unconquerable dislike to the public exercise of her profession, and turned a cold ear to all the lovers, honourable and dishonourable, who crowded around her, tiring her with extravagant flattery, and wearying her with offers of hearts not generally much worth having.

Prominent among these bowing and grimacing lovers was Mr. Walter Long, an old bachelor, whose estates afterwards descended to the celebrated heiress, Mrs. Wellesley Long Pole. Mr. Linley, cold, shrewd, and calculating, had stipulated that his fair daughter, being his apprentice, and a very profitable one too, the lover should, on his marriage, pay him (Linley) one thousand pounds for the loss of her professional services. Miss Linley's tears and remonstrances were treated with indifference. Wearied out at length by the arguments, threats, and remonstrances of her mercenary father, the poor girl at last consented to the marriage. Dresses and jewels were ordered; the day was fixed. Rumour's thousand tongues wagged ceaselessly, in scorn and ridicule, at the unequal match; the Pump-room was agitated; the beaux and ladies fluttering about the baths, with their chocolate cups on the buoyant trays before them, were never weary of discussing the coquetries by which the St. Cecilia of King Bladud's city had ensnared so wealthy a husband.

To the astonishment of the dumb-founded

* The length of this snake (I have the skin yet) was twelve feet and a half.

gossips, the intended marriage was, however, suddenly broken off. The poor girl, deserted apparently by all her friends, threw herself on the generosity of her old suitor, and begged him to release her from the engagement. Mr. Long was noble and generous. He not only released her from the promise, but took upon himself the blame of the separation. Disgusted Linley brought an action for his money, but it was untenable. Mr. Long, patient under the anger of disappointed greed, handed over the sum; and afterwards, in admiration of Miss Linley's candour and amiability, actually settled upon her the sum of three thousand pounds as a small compensation for the pain and persecution which his suit had caused her. The cruel London wits made great fun of this broken-off marriage, and Foote wrote a vulgar farce founded upon that latest bit of Bath scandal.

Among the lovers who now again began to flutter round the Beauty of Bath was Charles Sheridan, the son of an Irish teacher of elocution, who had been an actor and manager in Dublin, and had been driven from the city by theatrical riots. The elder Sheridan seems to have been pedantic, dogmatic, and quarrelsome, and in Dr. Johnson's opinion—the doctor being indignant at a ruined actor being pensioned by the government—"a vain man and a liar." He had boasted that he had once routed the doctor in argument, and that was an unpardonable offence. Boswell had taken a malicious pleasure in relating this boast to the doctor, of whose older friends he was always envious. The Sheridan family had been long a distinguished one, for the father of the elocution-master, an Irish clergyman and schoolmaster—a fiddling, punning, and doggerel-writing divine, thoughtless and extravagant to a marvel—had been one of Swift's special cronies. The elocution-master's wife, an amiable and clever woman, who wrote Sidney Biddulph, a novel now forgotten, was a favourite of Dr. Johnson, and is described by Dr. Parr and Tom Moore as "quite celestial," both for her virtues and her genius. The Sheridan family had been three or four years in Bath, and had from the first been very intimate with the Linleys. Charles Sheridan did not, however, advance very much in the affections of the belle and toast of the city. He was grave and studious, and Miss Linley professed merely to regard Charles with esteem as the brother of her bosom friend, Miss Sheridan. She preferred Richard Brinsley, the younger brother.

Richard, then just twenty, had been educated at Harrow under Dr. Parr, who had pronounced him lazy and unambitious. He was fond of poetry; but, to use the awful doctor's words, had "never distinguished himself in Latin or Greek composition." The boy was, however, prompt and acute, and there were vestiges of an original and daring mind. He spoke fervidly and with eloquence. His pranks and his vivacity were the delight of the school. Even then Dr. Parr thought his eyes, countenance, and general manner striking. At twenty he was

already a poet, and, what was better at that juncture, an excellent rider, fencer, and dancer, and a chivalrous gallant young fellow, full of wit and romance, liked by everybody but his father, whose fantastic rules of elocution he tacitly contemned.

Another of Miss Linley's pertinacious admirers at this time was Nathaniel Halhed, a clever young man, who had been Sheridan's friend at Harrow, and since that time a collaborateur with him in embryo farces, newspaper work, and translations. Halhed, soon daunted by the number and pretensions of the fair young singer's lovers, started for India, became a judge, rich, yellow, blessed with endless rupees and an enlarged liver. The field gradually thinned, for Charles Sheridan finding his passion daily increase and his chances of success hourly diminish, also withdrew from the contest. He dared not continue, and wrote Miss Linley a solemn and affecting farewell—which his youngest sister no doubt laughingly delivered—and withdrew into exile in a farm-house about eight miles from Bath. That siege was raised, the enemy beaten off with great discomfiture from "the fort they call a heart." More talk for the Pump-rooms, more remarks from painted tabbies, that "if there ever was a heartless flirt—and how people could—and as to eyes and complexion, &c.—ch, what do you say?" On many of these occasions Richard Sheridan stood forward bravely (and disinterestedly) for the slandered lady whom his brother Charles had loved and lost. This tattle and the sneers of these gossips made it necessary for Miss Linley frequently to meet her defender and adviser (nothing more) in a damp but sequestered grotto in Sidney-gardens, a grotto sheltered by a friendly weeping willow, and in which Sheridan wrote sentimental and graceful verse after the fashion of lovers and aspirants in that artificial age—this sort of Shenstone verse not unfamiliar to readers of old albums and lady's magazines circa 1771:

Yet oh! if indeed I've offended the maid,

If Delia my humble monition refuse,
Sweet willow, the next time she visits thy shade,
Fan gently her bosom, and plead its excuse.

And thou, stony grot, in thy arch may'st preserve

Two lingering drops of the night-fallen dew,
And just let them fall at her feet, and they'll serve
As tears of my sorrow entrusted to you.

No doubt the beautiful young lady with the powdered hair rising mountainously over her gentle and sensitive face, turned rose colour when she found those verses in the well-known hand lying on the mossy seat of the indubitably rheumatic grotto, and perhaps, while the pretty flushes still played upon her cheeks, two large dark eyes met hers through the trailing willow branches, and the next moment a sword tinkled against the stone seat as Richard sprang into the cave and pressed her hand, begging pardon (wicked hypocrite!) for his cruelty and mistrust at their last meeting.

Long before this, an Iago, the evil genius

of our old love story, had appeared, and, unnoticed by anybody, had spread his web, and arranged his pitfalls with Satanic subtlety. A Captain Mathews, a married man, had introduced himself to old Linley as a man who could be of service to him. Patrons of this kind were useful in selling concert tickets, and organising musical performances. The old composer was too confiding or too rapt in his studies to see through the scoundrel. Self-interest made him reluctant to discover evil in so zealous a friend. Miss Linley was a guileless, romantic, credulous girl of fourteen, fresh from country retirement, and surrounded by admiring fops, whose flattery was as extravagant and bizarre as it was transparently false. She believed no one's vows, but she pitied their pretended sufferings. For three years Mathews had never ceased his assiduities, his respectful and untiring gallantry, his protestation, and his sighs of counterfeit distress. The innocent girl liked him, and promised him her friendship. To turn this friendship into love, he redoubled his artifices. People now began to take alarm; friends spoke to old Linley; but he was unwilling to lose so useful a friend, and treated the rumours as mere nonsense. Miss Linley's heart was almost lost, and she began to reproach herself for her growing love. She says:

"When he went into the country for the summer, I resolved, whatever it cost me, to tear him from my heart, and when he returned, to avoid him everywhere. With these resolutions I consoled myself till winter. When he returned, he had not been in town a week before we had repeated invitations to his house. Conscious that I could never forget him if I was always to be exposed to his solicitations, I informed my mother of everything he had said to me, and at the same time told her how far he had gained my heart. Oh, my dear friend, had my mother but then acted properly, I had now been happy; but she, too much attached to interest, laughed at my uneasiness, and told me that novels had turned my head; and that I fancied if any one was civil to me he must certainly be in love. She desired I would put such thoughts out of my head, for no man could think seriously of such a child. Thus was I again led into temptation, and exposed to all the artifices of a man whom I already loved but too well, and who was but too sensible of it. I could not fly from the danger. After my first reproof I was ashamed to mention it again to my mother, and I had everything to fear from my father's violent temper. For another year we went on in the same manner, till at last, finding it impossible to conquer my inclinations, he soon brought me to a confession of my weakness, which has been the cause of all my distress."

She now forbade Mathews speaking to her, on which he pretended to be dying, and prayed earnestly for one final interview before he left England for ever. The interview took place. Mrs. Linley, informed of this, taxed her daughter with it, greatly enraged; but on hearing that the conduct of Mathews had been marked by

the strictest honour and respect, she consented to conceal the secret from her husband. This was a second fault in the mother.

The poor girl no longer tried to subdue her love, and still reproached herself with being the cause of such an honest man's wretchedness. Mrs. Linley then made her daughter write a letter to Mathews arranging an interview, and at the appointed hour went herself, confronted, and reproached him. Mathews, calm, polished, and plausible, however, so won the foolish and selfish mother, that he made her promise, if he swore never to see her daughter alone, that the intimacy between the two families should remain unbroken.

Soon after this, Miss Linley, while on a visit in the country, being told that Mr. Long was going to defend the action brought against him, and plead her interviews with Mr. Mathews, fell into a fever, became delirious, and manifested such symptoms of decline that she had to be sent to the Wells to drink the waters. Whilst there, she heard, to her indignation and anguish, that Mathews, during her illness, had been speaking lightly of her in public, and boasting that it was only love for him that had made her leave Bath. This heartless behaviour shocked and disgusted her, and in her anger she forgot her despondency.

"When I had so far recovered my spirits and health," she says, "as to be able to walk and ride, I became acquainted with Mr. R., who, from the first time he saw me, was particular in his behaviour to me. I did not at first observe it; and, as I thought him an agreeable man, and one who, I was told, bore an unexceptionable character, I did not avoid him as much as I certainly ought. I wished, likewise, by turning my attention to him, to eradicate every impression of Mathews; but though Mr. R. behaved with the greatest delicacy, I found it impossible to love him. I went on in this manner for some time, and, by Mr. R.'s attention to me, incurred the ill will of all the ladies, who did not spare to censure my conduct; but as I was conscious in my own heart of no ill, and wished to convince Mathews that he had not so much reason to boast of his conquest, I paid very little attention to the envy of the women."

Alas! Mr. R., too, was only a cowardly sort of lover. He one day confessed his love, but asked her to marry him privately, as he was entirely dependent on his father, except a small pension he had. At his father's death he would marry her again in the face of the world. Miss Linley, angry at this ignominious proposal, never more allowed Mr. R. to address her as a lover.

"I was thus situated," says the entangled girl, "when Mathews came to the Wells, on his road to Wales. He had been extremely ill at Bath, and when I saw him in the public walk at the Wells, I could scarce keep myself from fainting; there was such an alteration in his person, I could scarcely have believed it possible. He spoke to me once in the walk, and asked me if I resolved to be his death;

declared his illness proceeded from the accounts he had heard of me and R., and that he was now going into the country to die. You may be assured I was greatly affected with his words, but as I had suffered so much in my reputation by my being seen with him, I would not stay to explain myself, or upbraid him with his behaviour to me. I merely told him that the only way to convince me of his sincerity was to leave me, and never see me more. I left him, and immediately went home, where soon after a lady informed me he had fainted in the Long Room, and that his friends had taken him to Wales, given over by all.

"This news made me relapse, and had very nearly cost me my life, till I heard again that he was well and in good spirits, laughing at my distress, and exulting in the success of his scheme. This once more raised my resentment, and I was resolved to encourage Mr. R.; and though I could not consent to go off with him, I told him, with my father's consent, that when it was in his power, if he still retained his love for me, and I was free from any other engagement, I would marry him. When I returned to Bath he followed me; but as he was very much talked of, I would not suffer him to be so particular."

But R. proved, after all, worthless, and Miss Linley began now to think no man was worthy of a woman's heart. In this state of mortification, she was again compelled by her parents to see Mathews, who soon succeeded in vindicating himself and regaining her love. Our story is but the history of a woman's heart—its storms, its sunshine, and its final peace. Again Mathews's attentions become particular, and people begin again to whisper to old purblind Linley.

Let the persecuted young lady herself relate, in a picture worthy of Stothard, what then happened:

"I was one night going to bed, when I heard my father and mother talking very loud, and my name and Mathews's were repeated very often; this induced me to listen, and I heard my mother tell my father that I was miserable, and that Mathews was equally wretched—that we had loved each other for some years, and that she was sure it would be my death. My father seemed sometimes to pity and sometimes to condemn me; but at last he resolved I should never see him again. In the morning, when I came down to breakfast, my spirits were very low, and I could not refrain from tears; this soon brought on an explanation with my father, to whom I confessed everything that had passed. His behaviour was tender to a degree, and by that method he gained more upon me than if he had treated me harshly. Anger I can withstand, but tenderness I never could. My father, after many arguments, wherein he convinced me of the folly, if not wickedness, of such a connexion, made me promise never to see him more, and told me he would break off all intercourse with the family immediately."

The poor girl's heart was quite lost—she still

had not the courage to turn deaf ears to Mathews's feigned penitence and sham sufferings—but a good genius, stealthy as Mercury, and with a brain brimming with romantic and dramatic contrivances, was approaching fast, and with the cautious softness of a tiger-cat. A winged Perseus was already hovering far above and unseen over the timid and tortured Andromeda. Silently, noiselessly, inflexibly, Sheridan had pursued his purpose of winning the Beauty of Bath, with whom he had been secretly in love ever since he had left Harrow. He had long ago won her confidence and respect, but, "obscure and penniless," as he then described himself, he had not dared to present himself openly in the arena, nor had he had the opportunities granted to the rich gentlemen of fortune, who bought reckless numbers of concert tickets. He had jealously watched Mathews, and was waiting for the opportunity of openly proclaiming himself the lover of Elizabeth Linley. He had at first been won by Mathews's manner, but, detecting his base arts, had retained the character of his confidant, in order the better to discover his designs and frustrate his purposes. Mathews had even boasted to him how cleverly he had deceived the girl, and vaunted that she still believed him to be an angel.

The poor girl still believed in her worthless lover. In a letter, describing the whole unhappy affair, she says:

"When Mr. Sheridan came to me in the evening, I only told him something had happened to make me uneasy, but bade him tell Mathews that I would write to him. I accordingly wrote, and told him every circumstance that had happened; showed him how impossible it was for us to continue any such connexion, and begged—for still I thought him worthy—that he would write to tell me he was convinced by my arguments, and that we might part friends, though unhappy ones. He wrote to me, and comforted me greatly by assuring me of his approbation of my conduct, and that he was ready to acquiesce in anything that would make me happy, as he was unwilling to see my father.

"Mr. Sheridan was appointed to settle everything. He accordingly came to my father and told him what Mathews had said, and that he intended to write to my father, and bind himself in the most solemn manner never to see me again. My father was satisfied with this, and pitied Mathews greatly. He kept his word, and my father was happy that he had settled everything so amicably."

The letter was written, and the foolish father was satisfied that he had ended the matter for ever.

Sheridan prepared to unmask the rascal, by telling Miss Linley that if Mathews broke his word (which he must secretly have known he would), he, as a man of honour, engaged in the affair, would never be seen in company with him again. The very next day Miss Linley discovered on what a shifting shoal she had planted her love. A letter came from Mathews

saying he was going to London for two months, and that if she would not consent to sometimes see him he would shoot himself that very day.

Instead of letting the scoundrel shoot himself or not, just as he chose, the poor girl fell into fits. She must now, she thought, either break her word to her father or cause the death of the man she loved. Poor romantic girl, profoundly ignorant of the world and the world's ways, she little knew how little danger there was of the suicide of the gallant captain, and how wasted was all her tenderness on such a cruel scamp. She continues:

"At last I wrote and expostulated with him once more on the baseness of such a proceeding. This letter, instead of having the wished effect, produced another still more alarming. In this he flung off the tender behaviour for which I always loved him, and put on the language of a tyrant; told me he would see me—no father on earth should hinder him, and if I would not consent he would take me off by force. I answered this with some warmth, as I began to see I was deceived in him. I then insisted he should never write to me again, but he contrived to make me read a letter directed in another hand, wherein he told me we had both been deceived, through some mistake; said he had something to communicate of the utmost consequence to my future happiness, and if I would indulge him with ten minutes' conversation, he never after would desire to see me again; but if I refused the last request I must expect the worst.

"Terrified as I was, with no friend to advise me, I at last consented, and appointed an hour; but the moment he saw me he locked the door, and drawing a pistol from his pocket, uttered the most horrid imprecations, and swore if I would not bind myself by the most solemn oaths to see him again on his return from London, he would shoot himself before my face. Think, my dear girl, on my cruel situation. What could I do? Half distracted, I told him I would do anything rather than see him commit so rash an action. This was Saturday, and I promised him, if I was alive, to see him on Wednesday evening, during the concert. On this condition he let me go."

The poor girl was now almost mad with fear and dread of the future. Calling on Miss Sheridan, who was ill, she secreted a bottle of laudanum, resolved to destroy herself, and so save her lover's life and the happiness of her parents. She thus describes her attempted suicide:

"The next Sunday, after church, I left my mother and sisters walking. I sat down, made my will, and wrote a letter to my father and one to Mathews. While I was about it, Mr. Sheridan came in; he had observed me taking the laudanum, and when he saw me writing he seemed very much alarmed. At last, after swearing him to secrecy, I told him what I intended to do, and begged him to take charge of my letters. He used every argument in the world to dissuade me from it, but finding them all useless, he entreated me at least not

to take it till the afternoon, as he then would tell me something which he was sure would make me lay aside such thoughts entirely. Fearful of his betraying me, I consented, but the moment he was gone took half the quantity, and after dinner, finding it had no effect, took the rest."

But the lover saw the crisis fast approaching, for he had been in Mathews's confidence. He instantly went to two doctors to ask them to call that night at the Linleys'. On returning, to his indescribable horror he found the beautiful girl swooning on the settee, and apparently dying. He ran for the doctors; she had dropped on the floor apparently dead. By force they opened her mouth and poured down an emetic, which saved her life.

The moment had come for Sheridan to show his love, and expose the wickedness of Mathews. Miss Linley describes the interview:

"Monday evening Sheridan came to me. He expostulated with me with the greatest tenderness, and showed me the dreadful crime I had been about to commit, and for one who was every way unworthy of my least consideration. He then told me every circumstance relative to myself which Mathews had told him. He showed me letters he had received from him, and wherein his villany was fully explained. Judge what must be my feelings on finding the man for whom I had sacrificed life, fortune, reputation, everything that was dear, the most abandoned wretch that had ever existed. In his last letter to Sheridan he had told him that I had given him so much trouble that he had the greatest inclination to give me up, but his vanity would not let him do that without gaining his point. He therefore said he was resolved, the next time I met him, to throw off the mask; . . . but if I changed my mind, and would not see him, he was resolved to carry me off by force. The moment I read this horrid letter I fainted, and it was some time before I could recover my senses sufficiently to thank Mr. Sheridan for his opening my eyes. He said he had made Mathews believe that he was equally infamous that he might sooner know his designs, but he said it was not in his power to appear on a friendly footing any longer with such a villain. Mr. Sheridan then asked me what I designed. I told him my mind was in such a state of distraction between anger, remorse, and fear, that I did not know what I should do; but as Mathews had declared he would ruin my reputation, I was resolved never to stay in Bath."

Sheridan felt that, the flight once taken, her love for him must increase, and that her heart must soon be his. Her marriage must follow such a step, let what obstacles that would, arise. He proposed accompanying her to France and placing her in a convent at St. Quentin, where his sister had stayed four years. Once settled there, tranquil and happy, Sheridan would return and vindicate her conduct to the world.

The day of flight was to be the fatal Wednesday. Miss Sheridan (afterwards Mrs. Lefanu)

was persuaded by her eloquent and dexterous brother to lend money for the travelling expenses, to pack the trunks, and to aid the escape. "At last," says Miss Linley, in her narrative, "Sheridan came with two chairs, and having put me half fainting into one, and my trunks into another, I was carried to a coach that waited in Walcot-street. Sheridan had engaged the wife of one of his servants to go with me as a maid without my knowledge. You may imagine how pleased I was with his delicate behaviour." The sedan-chair, with its precious burden, was carried off while Mr. Linley, his eldest son, and Maria Linley were busy at a concert, from appearing at which the fair Cecilia herself had only been excused by her illness. She was conveyed from her father's house, in the Crescent, to a post-chaise which waited for them in the London road. They reached the metropolis at nine o'clock the next morning.

Charles Lamb has left on record (though he makes several extraordinary mistakes in his short narration) that the young couple, on arriving in the great smoky bewildering city, took refuge at Lamb's godfather's, an oilman, at the Holborn end of Featherstone-buildings. He was a tall-grown pompous person, friendly with John Palmer, the comedian. Lamb's father and mother were there, playing at quadrille, when the pair arrived. With a humorous adroitness, which was, at least, very dramatic, Sheridan introduced Miss Linley to an old friend of his family (Mr. Ewart, a respectable brandy-merchant in the City) as a rich heiress who had consented to elope with him to the Continent; in consequence of which the old gentleman, with many commendations of Sheridan's wisdom for having given up the imprudent pursuit of Miss Linley, not only accommodated the fugitives with a passage on board a ship which he had ready to sail from the port of London to Dunkirk, but gave them letters of recommendation to his correspondents at that place, who with the same zeal and despatch facilitated their journey to Lille. Miss Linley had, on her arrival in France, changed her name to Harley. On leaving Dunkirk, Sheridan at once threw away his temporary character of the chivalrous and platonic protector, and changed into the ardent, devoted, and irresistible lover. He soon convinced his fair charge, who listened not unwillingly to his arguments, that it was impossible for her to ever return to England unsullied but as his wife. There was then still truth and honour in the world, and the love of a brave and honest man was the only consolation left to her lacerated heart. At the latter end of March, 1772, they were married at a little village not far from Calais by a priest as well known as the blacksmith at Gretna-green for his indifference as to how he obtained his fees. At Lille they abandoned all intention of going to St. Quentin, Sheridan meeting an old schoolfellow, who introduced them to the amiable family of Dr. Dolman, who procured Miss Linley an apartment in a convent, after attending her through a short illness produced by fatigue and agitation of mind.

The selfish and unwise father soon arrived, hot, flurried, and angry, chiefly anxious that his rash daughter should fulfil some engagements he had made for her at the ensuing musical festivals. The strict honour of Sheridan's conduct being soon explained, and a promise made that Miss Linley should in a few weeks return to the quiet convent at Lille, the whole party returned amicably to England. The honourable swindler had, in the mean time, written a perfectly cool, innocent sort of letter to his deluded brother Charles, whom Sheridan's landlord had already roused to the disagreeable and startling truth. The quietly contented lover said: "Though you may have been ignorant for some time of our proceedings, *you* never could have been uneasy lest anything should tempt me to depart, even in a thought, from the honour and consistency which engaged me at first. I wrote to M. (Matthews) above a week ago, which, I think, was necessary and right. I hope he has acted the only proper part which was left him; and, to speak from my *feelings*, I cannot but say that I shall be very happy to find no further disagreeable consequences pursuing him; for, as Brutus says of Cesar, &c. I must stop this moment, or I shall lose the post."

Rushing off to Bath, Charles Sheridan found Mathews stark mad with chagrin and hurt vanity, furiously listening in impotent rage, at the Linleys' house, to all the particulars of the bold flight which had so completely defeated his scoundrelly designs. In his vexation, he let fall some imprudent charges against the victorious Esau, who had made such a fool of them both, and those hasty words the bad and mean man stored up as future missiles against his enemy. "For the four or five weeks," says Tom Moore, "during which the young couple were absent, he never ceased to haunt the Sheridan family with inquiries, rumours, and other disturbing visitations; and at length, urged on by the restlessness of revenge, inserted the following violent advertisement in the Bath Chronicle:

" 'Wednesday, April 8, 1772.

" 'Mr. Richard S. having attempted, in a letter left behind him for that purpose, to account for his scandalous method of running away from this place, by insinuations derogating from *my* character and that of a young lady, innocent as far as relates to *me* or *my* knowledge; since which he has taken no notice of letters, or even informed his own family of the place where he has hid himself; I can no longer think he deserves the character of a gentleman, and shall therefore trouble myself no further about him than, in this public method, to post him as a L and a treacherous S

" 'And as I am convinced there have been many malevolent incendiaries concerned in the propagation of this infamous lie, if any of them, unprotected by *age*, *infirmities*, or profession, will dare to acknowledge the part they have acted, and affirm to what they have said of me,

they may depend on receiving the proper reward of their villany, in the most public manner. The world will be candid enough to judge properly (I make no doubt) of any private abuse on this subject for the future, as nobody can defend himself from an accusation he is ignorant of.

“‘THOMAS MATTHEWS.’”

In vain Miss Sheridan appealed against these charges; in vain Charles Sheridan generously denied them, and was about to seek satisfaction at the sword's point, when Mathews, cowardly as he was frantic, suddenly left Bath for London.

In reply to the slanderous and insolent letters of Mathews, Richard Sheridan declared that he would never sleep in England till he had treated Mathews as he deserved. He kept his word. He sat up all night at Canterbury. His own contemptuous account of the cur's behaviour when challenged in London must here be given:

“Mr. S. came to Mr. Cochlin's, in Crutched-friars (where Mr. M. was lodged), about half-after twelve. The key of Mr. C.'s door was lost. Mr. S. was denied admittance. By two o'clock he got in. Mr. M. had previously been down to the door, and told Mr. S. he should be admitted, and had retired to bed again. He dressed, complained of the cold, endeavoured to get heat into him, called Mr. S. his *dear friend*, and forced him to *sit down*. Mr. S. had been informed that Mr. M. had sworn his death—that Mr. M. had in numberless companies produced bills on France, whither he meant to retire on the completion of his revenge. Mr. M. had warned Mr. Ewart to advise his friend not to come in his way without a sword, as he could not answer for the consequences. Mr. M. had left two letters for Mr. S., in which he declares he is to be met with at *any* hour, and begs Mr. S. will not ‘deprive himself of so much sleep, or stand on any ceremony.’ Mr. S. called on him at the hour mentioned; Mr. S. was admitted with the difficulty mentioned. Mr. S. declares that, on Mr. M.'s perceiving that he came to answer them to his challenge, he does not remember ever to have seen a *man* behave so perfectly dastardly. Mr. M. detained Mr. S. till seven o'clock the next morning. He (Mr. M.) said he never meant to quarrel with Mr. S. He convinced Mr. S. that his enmity ought to be directed solely against his brother and another gentleman at Bath. Mr. S. went to Bath. . . .”

On his arrival at Bath with the Linleys, Richard instantly accused Charles of the slander. Charles indignantly denied it, and approved with warmth of the elopement. As soon as the family had retired for the night, the two brothers slipped out and took post to London, Richard Sheridan leaving behind him the following letter for Mr. Wade, the master of the ceremonies. It is a curious specimen of the duellist's punctilios in that age:

“Sir. I ought to apologise to you for again

troubling you with a subject which should concern so few. I find Mr. Mathews's behaviour to have been such that I cannot be satisfied with his *concession*, as a *consequence* of an explanation from me. I called on Mr. Mathews last Wednesday night, at Mr. Cochlin's, without the smallest expectation of coming to any *verbal* explanation with him. A proposal of a *pacific* meeting the next day was the consequence, which ended in those advertisements and the letter to you. As for Mr. Mathews's honour or *spirit* in this whole affair, I shall only add that a few hours may possibly give some proof of the latter; while, in my own justification, I affirm that it was far from being my fault that this point now remains to be determined. On discovering Mr. Mathews's benevolent interposition in my own family, I have counter-ordered the advertisements that were agreed on, as I think even an *explanation* would now misbecome me: an agreement to them was the effect more of mere *charity* than *judgment*. As I find it necessary to make all my sentiments as public as possible, your declaring this will greatly oblige—Your very humble servant, R. B. Sheridan. Sat., 12 o'clock, May 2nd, 1772.

The scenes the next morning in the romantic and impulsive Linley and Sheridan families were terrible. Everybody was in tears; Miss Linley and all the ladies fainted. The high words of the night before had been overheard, and it was supposed that the brothers had left Bath for a deadly combat. Grave Dr. Priestley, who was lodging in the Linleys' house, was the incongruous witness of this excitement and terror.

Instantly on his arrival in town, Sheridan called the cowardly rogue out, Mr. Ewart being his second; Captain Knight officiated for the Welshman. They entered Hyde Park about six o'clock, and walked together to the Ring. Sheridan, in his own account, says:

“Mr. Mathews refusing to make any other acknowledgment than he had done, I observed that we were come to the ground; Mr. Mathews objected to the spot, and appealed to you. We proceeded to the back of a building on the other side of the Ring; the ground was there perfectly level. I called on him and drew my sword (he having previously declined pistols). Mr. Ewart observed a sentinel on the other side of the building; we advanced to another part of the park. I stopped again at a seemingly convenient place; Mr. Mathews objected to the observation of some people at a great distance, and proposed to retire to the Hercules' Pillars till the park should be clear; we did so. In a little time we returned. I again drew my sword; Mr. Mathews again objected to the observation of a person who seemed to watch us. Mr. Ewart observed that the chance was equal; and engaged that no one should stop him, should it be necessary for him to retire to the gate, where we had a chaise and four, which was equally at his service. Mr. Mathews declared that he would not engage while there was any one in sight, and proposed to defer it

till next morning. I turned to you and said that 'this was trifling work,' that I could not admit of any delay, and engaged to remove the gentleman (who proved to be an officer), and who then left."

The shirker was at last aroused by taunts (as sluggish bulls in the Spanish arenas are stimulated by fireworks). He drew his reluctant sword and threw himself into position. Sheridan was on him in a moment, hot as Tybalt. The thrusts were swift and furious; the parries subtle and dexterous; one turn of the wrist, one glance of the steel, and the heart of one or the other would pour out its best life-blood. Suddenly, amid all this cunning of fence, Sheridan, with a wild impulse of rage and fury, leaped within his adversary's guard, dashed his sword from his hand, and drove him to the ground. There, bleeding and bruised, the slanderer sued for his life, and signed a full confession and retraction of his published falsehoods. Sheridan then left him in scorn and disgust, and, on his return to Bath, instantly published in the public journals the man's abject confession.

Maddened by the contempt of the world, and as covered with disgrace as a thief just fresh from the pillory, Mathews skulked back to his Glamorganshire property, there also to find himself scouted in the ball-room, pointed at at the covert-side, and derided in the sessions court. Stung to rage, and as a last hope, he returned to the scene of his hopeless disgrace and demanded another meeting. At last he was thirsty for blood and eager to die, if he could only expire on the body of his dead rival.

Sheridan's friends urged him not to go out. Mathews was indelibly disgraced, and had been fairly defeated; but there is gunpowder in an Irishman's blood, and Sheridan was too chivalrous to refuse the meeting.

The two inveterate enemies met on Kingsdown, outside Bath. Mr. Barnett was Sheridan's second; Captain Knight the captain's. They had both pistols and swords this time; death to one or both seemed certain. Mathews had nothing to lose. Mr. Sheridan had boundless hope before him, a love transcendently fervent and pure, and the career of a great mind. All these, however, he cast behind him, as of no more value than the cocked-hat or laced coat he threw upon the turf, and the fight began with a relentless and deadly fury. The pistols were pointed with care, but both discharges were without effect. The two duellists then flashed out their swords and rushed upon each other with a ferocity almost unknown in the fashionable English duel. Their swords met in thrust and parry quicker than the eye could follow—the carte and tierce and stab of madmen, eager only to kill or to be killed. An opening of a hair's breadth came, and Sheridan rushed blindly in to grapple Mathews's sword-wrist, and disarm him as before. But Mathews had this time the cunning as well as the savagery of delirium and despair; he twisted away his sword-arm and closed on his wily and dangerous an-

tagonist. The struggle now was foot to foot, chest to chest, wrestling, hewing, stabbing with swords shortened into daggers. Passion and skill were on both sides. Both were in the prime of life—robust, lithe, sinewy, and powerful. Both were bleeding, and pale with the paroxysm of their rage. Each was trying to get his sword free to pass it straight through the lungs or heart of the other. Both were severely wounded and in danger. At last, in a scuffling wrestle, they both fell to the ground, weak with loss of blood, and in that heavy fall both their swords snapped in two.

Mathews was uppermost, and sneeringly triumphant at the advantage. He pressed his whole weight on Sheridan, and stabbing at his chest and side with his broken sword, exultingly demanded of him whether he would beg for his life.

"Never," gasped Sheridan, "never;" then fell back and fainted from loss of blood.

The disgraceful seconds, who had calmly permitted this savage duel, now interposed, and carried Sheridan to his chaise. Mathews and his friend proceeded immediately to London. Sheridan's wounds were deep and dangerous, and confined him to his bed for several weeks. Of the scoundrel we hear no more. He had had his quietus at last, both from the pen and the sword. Miss Linley, though in agony at the danger of the hero who had twice ventured his life for her, was never permitted to see him till long after he recovered. Old Sheridan thought the match a disgrace, and so did old Linley. Two old pedants! Young Sheridan was of no profession, and had no expectations. He had written some essays, but who could live on essays? Above all, the audacious fellow disliked the Maid of Bath's singing in public; but who could baffle so artful, dramatic, and ingenious a lover? He tried all the disguises of Proteus; he even, as a coachman, drove the glass coach that Miss Linley ordered to and from the concert. They met in this way frequently, and also corresponded. At length Sheridan entered himself at the Middle Temple, and the selfish and unwise Linleys then gave way, but with a bad grace. The two devoted lovers were married on the 13th of April, 1773. Sheridan reluctantly allowed his beautiful young wife to appear once more at Oxford and also at the Worcester Festival, compelling her, however (to old grubbing Linley's horror and dismay), to put all the money given her into the plate of the charity. For this foolish but chivalrous pride Dr. Johnson highly commended him.

The doctor, with all the high spirit of a Roman senator, exclaimed, "He resolved wisely and nobly, to be sure. He is a brave man. Would not a gentleman be disgraced by having his wife sing publicly for hire? No, sir, there can be no doubt here. I know not if I should not prepare myself for a public singer as readily as let my wife be one."

The young couple were then living at a pretty rose-covered cottage at East Burnham.

They spent the winter with Prince Hoare, the composer. In the spring following, Sheridan broke out in a gorgeous house in Orchard-street, Portman-square. With that step began his ruin. That was in 1774. In 1816, Sheridan, a worn-out, drunken, friendless, impoverished, disgraced man, who had recklessly thrown away his genius, expired in the extremest poverty, the sheriff's officers eager to carry him to die in a Cursitor-street sponging-house.

On a cast of that small delicate nervous hand of Sheridan's, that had twice grasped the sword with such deadly determination to chastise a scoundrel, Tom Moore wrote this smart epigram:

Good at a fight, but better at a play;
God-like in giving, but the devil to pay.

IN DIFFICULTIES. THREE STAGES.

THIRD STAGE. THROUGH THE BANKRUPTCY COURT.

THERE is one particular in which the inmates of the sponging-house in Bream's-buildings and those of Whitecross-street prison, resemble each other. Every individual among them is—according to his own account—on the eve of release. Ask any prisoner for debt when he expects to be set free, and in ninety-nine instances out of a hundred he will reply that he is certain to be at liberty next day, or, at furthest, in a day or two. "Arrangements are being made," or "The affair will be settled off-hand," or "The trifle he is in for would not detain him a day, but that there are other matters which would be compromised if he paid off this detainer;" and so forth. It is very rare indeed to find a prisoner who has looked his affairs in the face.

In Whitecross-street, it is astonishing what an amount of freemasonry exists among the residents. No sooner does a new inmate make his appearance in a ward, than two or three of his fellow-prisoners make up to him and question him in the most off-hand manner as to how much he is "in for," whether he has been arrested on a *capias* or a *ca. sa.*, whether he intends to "go through the mill" (which means, pass through the Bankruptcy Court), or expects to settle? There is nothing offensive or impertinent in the way these interrogations are put, and he who is questioned is generally quite as ready to answer as the questioners are to ask. He finds himself in a position so new, that he is glad to find any one who will give him information. Prisoners are generally much disposed to help each other. When a prisoner is too poor to pay for his rations at the general table, he is served by the warder with food from the prison kitchen. This is called being "on the county," for I believe the county of Middlesex pays for the victuals of all who are too poor to feed themselves. The food is very fair in its way, but the having to eat it alone, and having it brought in three times a day for one or two prisoners in the

ward, is humiliating, and is an open confession of destitution.

I would rather pass three months in solitary confinement, with the means of improving my mind, than remain one month in Whitecross-street. Not that all the inmates of the prison are of the ruffian stamp. I have met as gentlemanly and intelligent men in Whitecross-street as I have met out of it, and I have had as kind offers of service made me in their small way by men in difficulties as I ever had by wealthy persons in the every-day world. But the bad in that place are very bad. Card-sharpers, betting loafers, blacklegs, joint-stock company swindlers, captains who never belonged to any regiment, clergymen who have been deprived of their curacies or livings, all these are mixed up with men who, though in debt, are respectable, and who are struggling their hardest to get out of their difficulties. To the tavern-haunting ruffian—whose only source of income is what he can pick up at cards, in flash bets, and by exacting payment of what is lost to him, but "welshing" when he loses to others—it is no punishment at all to be shut up in Whitecross-street for a month or two. But to the decently educated mechanic, the respectable shopkeeper, or the man who, although poor, is a gentleman in his habits and ideas, it is a very great punishment.

In one of the abominable sleeping-bunks (which I have described in a previous chapter) near me, was a young man—a student, if I remember right, in some missionary college—and next to him was a clergyman, the coolest possible specimen of an unprincipled swindler, though talking at times an immense deal of cant. This reverend gentleman, some sixty years of age, was the incumbent of a large parish about a hundred miles from London. His living was worth about five hundred pounds a year, and his wife had six hundred pounds a year in her own right. "I married her for her money," the fellow told us openly, though he had never seen one of us a week before. "She was very ugly; she soon got jealous of every woman that came near me." This with a wink which a satyr might have been proud of. "She demanded a legal separation; I consented on condition that she allowed me half the money; she agreed; but I found I could not get on with three hundred pounds a year besides my living. The bishop refused to induct me into a better living which had been presented me, because, he said, there was something against my morals; and as my debts amounted to three thousand six hundred pounds, they arrested me, and now I must wipe all off in the Bankruptcy Court." As a jolly boon companion—he used somehow to get spirits into the prison, although goodness knows how, and was very liberal with the punch he made—I never knew a pleasanter fellow than this reverend gentleman; but I hope there are not many clergymen of the English Church like him, and I do not believe there are.

But by far the best fellow in the ward was

an ex-captain of heavy dragoons, who was on the eve of passing through the Bankruptcy Court for the fourth time. He was one of the biggest men, and one of the most cheery vagabonds, I ever came across. He told numberless stories of his adventures and slips in the monetary line, in which, even by his own account, his conduct had been the reverse of honest. According to his history, he had commenced life with six thousand pounds a year and a commission in a crack cavalry regiment. "But," as he used to say with the utmost gravity, "I made the running too early in the race, and could not 'stay' with the other horses. In six years I had sold every acre of land, every pound of Consols, and had run on the wrong side of the post to the tune of twelve thousand pounds. I sold out, and the price of my troop paid half my debts. I went through the court for about six thousand pounds, and then set to work as a private gentleman. I lived a little by betting, a little by whist, a little by billiards, a little by a few fivers and tenners that I 'borrowed' from friends and relations when I was very hard up. So long as I kept to what I understood, I got on well enough; but the devil tempted me to set up as a wine-merchant, and in one year I lost—that is, I *owed*, for I had no losses in trade—fifteen hundred pounds, and I then went through the court the second time. How did I lose the money? I'll tell you. I used to get, say, three hundred pounds' or four hundred pounds' worth of wine, giving three months' bills to the importer for what I bought. When my customers paid me, I spent the money, and did not meet my engagements. The wholesale wine-merchants got angry; one of them arrested me; and I had to go through the court. I was sent back, and had to remain six months in this hole. I then set up as a coal-merchant, but made a mess of that; for I found that I paid higher for the coals I bought than I could retail them for, even if I had sold them by the sack out of a hand cart. So I had to go through the court as a coal-merchant. Since then I have been a promoter of companies, and that *was* the jolliest game by far. Why, I had at one time a matter of nearly four thousand pounds to my credit in one of the City banks. But the times all went bad, and I was sued right and left by those who had taken shares in the concerns I had 'promoted,' and so I was arrested, and here I am. The Commissioner made some difficulty, the other day, about my cash account; but I shall be all right soon, and shall slip through the court very easily. If you are inclined to do anything about any horse for the Chester Cup, I am your man." I met him the other day in the Dover train; he told me he was going to Paris for a week, he had taken again to his old business of betting, and had "landed seven hundred pounds upon Hermit" at the last Derby.

During the short time that I was an inmate of the prison, seven persons who were prisoners with me lost their situations, and entire means of living, from being shut up. One was a curate

in a West-end parish, two were officers in the army, a third was a clerk in a merchant's office, a fourth was employed in some waterworks, a fifth was a superintendent of insurance agencies, a sixth and myself were travellers for wholesale houses. All these persons had done no worse than been careless about money matters. Not that even this kind of indebtedness can be defended; but it is a poor, a short-sighted, and a cruel policy to punish a man by the loss of his employment—which is certain to follow his being locked up—and to punish all his creditors at the same time. The whole system of debt-recovery and imprisonment for debt is very faulty indeed. It promotes rascality. The only persons who profit by it are attorneys of a certain class. To them its abolition would be the depriving them of what they almost consider as their "vested interests." Not but that I consider these gentlemen do their best for their clients, and are fairly entitled to whatever they earn, or gain, or make in their business. But it seems to me that the welfare of the creditor ought to be the first consideration, and if it be not, it would be as well to have no bankruptcy laws. Take my own case. My expenses at Bream's-buildings and Whitecross-street, together with fees for legal advice, expenses of the court, and other items, amounted to rather more than double the amount of the debt which I had been put into prison for. Surely common sense was wanting when such a code of bankruptcy laws was invented.

Whilst I was in Whitecross-street, a very wealthy merchant was arrested and brought in to the prison. When I say "very wealthy," I mean that he had the reputation of being so, although it turned out, when his affairs came to be looked into, he had been insolvent for four years. He was sued, and judgment being signed for a very large amount, he was taken upon a warrant, issued without any notice, on affidavit that the debtor was about to leave the country. He was no doubt going to France; but he had no intention of remaining there. It seems that it was the interest of certain people to make him a bankrupt, and he was accordingly made one. But when he appeared before the Commissioner, the magnitude of his debts—something like three hundred and eighty thousand pounds—seemed to inspire respect, and he was treated with the utmost consideration, even when he went up for his last examination; and when it was well known that his estate would not pay more than two shillings in the pound. In Whitecross-street he had many small indulgences granted him that were denied to others. One of the aldermen came to see him, another sent him wine and game, a member of parliament left a haunch of venison at the gate for him. And yet it turned out—and must have been well known to many of those who were most civil to him—that this man had commenced the most gigantic speculations with no capital whatever, and that he had settled about thirty thousand pounds upon his wife. He did not remain more than a week in Whitecross-

street. And when he went up for his final discharge before the Commissioner, he was hardly asked a question, though, to my certain knowledge, more than a dozen families had been utterly ruined by his failure.

In my last chapter I mentioned that, having filed my petition as a bankrupt, I went before the Commissioner to ask that I might be released from prison, but was refused the boon, one creditor having objected, and had, therefore, to go back to prison until the choice of assignees. This took place about a fortnight later. The theory of this ceremony is, that all the creditors of a prisoner meet together, and select among themselves, by open voting, the individual whom they deem the most fitting person to look after their interests. But the practice is very different. To these meetings of assignees hardly any creditors, save two or three of the chief, ever come; and of those who do, each try to be made assignee, so that he may name his own legal adviser as solicitor for the estate of the bankrupt. If the latter have failed for a good round sum, to be named solicitor for the estate is worth several hundred—sometimes one or two thousand—pounds. Even in my petty case, to get the solicitorship of the estate was twenty or thirty pounds in the pocket of the attorney; and so, out of the three creditors who attended the meeting, two came provided with attorneys. Of course each creditor voted for himself to be assignee, and so the difficulty to be got over was the third gentleman. Now, this third happened to be a hard-headed Scotsman, a man of business in every way. At first he would not vote for either one or other of the other two creditors; but at last he was talked over, and I have reason to believe that matters were “made pleasant” to him by a cheque for five pounds, and to the others by an undertaking that whatever pickings there might be upon my carcass should be equally divided between the solicitors of the other two parties. All this took place in court under the nose of the Commissioner; but, as other cases were going on at the same time, and as this was considered a purely private arrangement, no notice was taken of it. At last, the messenger, or clerk of the court, was informed that *In re Smith*, Mr. Tossels, accountant, of Crow-street, was appointed assignee, and that he, Mr. Tossels, had named Mr. Firkenson, attorney, of Great James-street, solicitor to the estate. The choice of assignees being thus made, I renewed my application for release from custody.

It happened that Mr. Tossels—nominally an accountant, but really a discounter of accommodation bills, who held the acceptance mentioned in my last chapter as having my name behind it—was the creditor who had opposed my discharge when I had asked for it on filing my petition. He might oppose my discharge a second time. It was not certain that he would succeed, but it was by no means certain that he would not.

At any rate, my own solicitor—who had seen me thus far on my road, but who was now about to take leave of me, as another solicitor had been appointed to the estate—advised me not to risk it before I had seen how the land lay. “Take my advice,” said he. “I know Tossels, and I know Firkenson; they have it in their power to give you a great deal of trouble. Matters in the Bankruptcy Court are managed a good deal by the rule of thumb. Before I ask for your discharge from custody, let me have a little talk with Tossels. He has had to give up about ten pounds of the pickings he would have got out of you. Will you give that amount to ‘square’ him and make all safe?” At first I was inclined to declare that I would stand on my rights according to English law. “Don’t talk rubbish,” said my solicitor; “whether would you rather be certain of going home to-night, or run the chance of opposition, and being sent back to jail, on the plea that you are a commercial traveller, and as likely as not to go abroad; or else that, having no employment, you have nothing to keep you in England, and that you might slip away to America or Australia? If Tossels were to make this a reason of opposition to your release, the Commissioner might order you to find very heavy bail for your appearance to answer in bankruptcy. He might take another view of the case; but, just as likely as not, he might take this, particularly if Tossels were very urgent.”

I told my solicitor that he might do as he deemed best, and I saw him for full ten minutes in close consultation with Tossels and Firkenson. He then came towards me smiling, and saying he had “squared” the affair, having given his undertaking to pay Tossels ten pounds on my behalf before my next meeting, and having also promised that my accounts should be prepared by the same gentleman in his character of accountant. He then formally asked for my discharge from custody, and, there being no opposition, I at once obtained it. A document, called my “protection,” was then ordered to be made out, by virtue of which I could not be arrested, or taken in execution, on any civil process whatever. And thus I was free to go home, though it was necessary for me to return to Whitecross-street for an hour or two until certain papers were completed.

“What luck?” was the salutation that greeted me on every side when I got back to the ward. When I told my fellow-prisoners that I had pulled through this stage of my proceedings, they seemed almost as glad as if they themselves had all been set at liberty. And when, later in the afternoon, the warder came to tell me that my release had come and I was free to depart, they gave me three hearty cheers.

I arrived at home exactly three weeks after my first arrest. The effects of it had been to lose me my situation; to make me spend, what with one expense and another, and fees of court, about thirty-five pounds; to bring my affairs no nearer to a settlement than they were

before; and to force me into bankruptcy, which would end in my creditors not getting paid a penny, nor a halfpenny, in the pound. I was so far the sufferer, that I had to look out for another situation and begin the world afresh; my creditors were so far the sufferers, as that I was—or would very soon be—legally free from all my liabilities towards them. So much for imprisonment for debt, and our present law of bankruptcy.

My first meeting—playfully called that “for choice of assignees”—being over, my second—called “for examination and discharge”—was fixed for a day some six weeks later. By this time I was quite up to all the moves on the bankruptcy board, and had fully imbibed that spirit which possesses a man who is hunted by difficulties and creditors. I saw that my game lay in keeping my assignee, Tossels, and his attorney, Ferkinson, in good humour. The ten pounds promised to the former I paid, as well as five pounds for making up my accounts, and five pounds more as a fee for trouble. The original amount of the bill of which Tossels was the holder, was a hundred and twenty pounds. Of this, about sixty pounds remained due. I had paid, under various pretences, twenty pounds to Tossels, so there remained but a balance of forty pounds. I now proposed—through a third party—to give him two bills of twenty pounds each, payable at three and six months, provided he gave his word that he would not oppose me at my meeting for discharge. He objected that, in consequence of my being out of any engagement or situation, my signature was worth nothing. But he said that if my father-in-law would give a written undertaking to a third party—Tossels’s name not being mentioned in the letter, though *he* was the person to benefit thereby—that, if I obtained my discharge at the next meeting, he, my father-in-law, would give the said party two bills for twenty-five pounds each, at three and six months, then Tossels would not only not oppose me, but would make it his special business to facilitate my going through the court smoothly. This my father-in-law agreed to, and so my path was smoothed—with what justice we will not discuss.

When a bankrupt’s assignee has been chosen, it is in the power of that assignee to worry and annoy the bankrupt very much. The rule through this stage of the whitewashing process is—like the rest of the proceedings in bankruptcy—the rule of thumb; there is, in fact, no rule. I know of one young man, who, after having, like myself, lost his situation in a merchant’s office owing to being imprisoned for debt, obtained, with great difficulty, another situation shortly after the choice of assignee. The latter owed him a grudge, and insisted that he should attend upon him to verify accounts at three P.M. every day, the hour when the young man was busiest in his office. He remonstrated, but the assignee would listen to nothing, and said that if he did not attend at that hour he (the as-

signee) would represent to the Commissioner at the next meeting that the bankrupt had not done his utmost to give an account of his estate. He had to give up his appointment, and was ruined.

But having satisfied my assignee, I had no such consequence to fear. On the day appointed, I appeared in court, and the whole affair did not last half an hour. “In re Smith,” said the clerk of the court; when up got Ferkinson and said, “I appear for the assignee, your Honour, who is perfectly content with the assistance the bankrupt has afforded him in making up his accounts.” “I should like to examine the bankrupt,” said the Commissioner. I stepped into the witness-box; and being duly sworn, said that I attributed my failure to insufficiency of income arising from trade being bad, and from my commissions as a commercial traveller being very much reduced; also, to pressure from creditors. The Commissioner was very kind in his manner, and, it being officially asked two or three times whether there was any opposition “In re Smith,” and no answer being given, I was declared discharged, and was thenceforward free. My father-in-law kept his word; Tossels in time got his money. I obtained another situation.

And now, if any one asks why I wrote this description of my “difficulties,” I reply that I wrote it to point out the anomalies of our English bankruptcy laws. Some one has said that the worst thing you can do with a man is to hang him. I add, that the next worst thing you can do with him is to put him in prison. And above all, as I pointed out in my second chapter, how is it that, in a country which boasts of its justice, a man who owes a comparatively small sum—and who is consequently supposed to be a comparatively poor man—can be imprisoned again and again for twenty days at a time, and yet the debt not be discharged?

Abolish imprisonment for debt, and a great deal of the rash credit now given will be abolished with it. Men of all classes will live more within their means. I do not say that there should be no remedy for creditors. But it is not through the imprisonment of debtors, nor through the Bankruptcy Court, that they will find their remedy.

PROLL. A MYSTERY.

In the last will and testament of Mr. John Smith, of Allsop-terrace, Halifax (the instrument may be consulted by the incredulous at the usual expense of a shilling and patience), will be found a paragraph to the following effect:

“Also, I give and bequeath to ‘Proll,’ whatever or whomsoever that may prove to be, his or her heirs or legal representatives, the sum of three thousand pounds Three per Cent Consolidated Bank Annuities, desiring that my executors, hereinafter named, shall make every reasonable effort for the discovery of the aforesaid ‘Proll,’

his or her, &c.; which efforts shall comprise an advertisement, thrice repeated, in a leading London journal, as well as the local papers of Liverpool and Birmingham. And, in default of such efforts proving successful within a year and a day, then my said executors shall expend the fund aforesaid in the purchase of some sufficing tokens for the reward of any remarkable deeds of personal prowess, which shall be and occur within three years of my decease."

The singular wording of this bequest created much local interest at the time, and attracted an unusual amount of attention to the character and history of a harmless little man who might have otherwise slipped out of this bustling world as noiselessly as he had dwelt in it.

Mr. John Smith was the only son of a Halifax apothecary, who left him at his death, which did not occur until the "boy" was past forty, the possessor of an income of five hundred pounds a year. John had been destined (in his cradle) for his father's profession; but nature, in the form of a peculiarly timid and susceptible temperament, raised such objections, that the project had to be abandoned, and trout-fishing in summer, and snipe-shooting in winter, formed the leading occupations of the young man's life, until these sports were interrupted, for a season, by the decease of his respected sire, and the consequent duty of looking into his own affairs. This discharged, Mr. John returned to the snipe and trout with undiminished ardour.

The change in his habits was, indeed, so slight as to be hardly perceptible. Even the two old servants, husband and wife, who had, from time immemorial to him, formed the domestic establishment, and whom he (John) had, from kindly motives, dismissed, superannuated, with a handsome allowance, insisting that Master John was not getting on nicely without them, came quietly back; dismissed, without the slightest ceremony, the provisional maid; and resumed their accustomed duties with all the vigour of youth!

John Smith has been described, by a gentleman who lived in his immediate neighbourhood, as an under-educated but well-mannered little man, with a pug nose, watery eyes, and a funny little flickering smile, which seemed to have been caught from the ripple of the brook over which it had been his delight to hang since boyhood. Take John Smith altogether, body and mind, he was perhaps the very last individual in the world to whom anything romantic or mysterious was likely to attach. And yet John Smith had a romance and a mystery; and (like a queer little parenthesis in the social annals of the world) here we chronicle the same, taking up the history about two years subsequent to the commencement of John's orphanhood.

Although Mr. Smith had never been in the habit of giving regular dinner-parties, it was a frequent custom with him to invite two or three of his chief gossips to partake of a brace of Wandle trout, most of which, weight, condition, disposition, and all, were (while yet in their native element) so well known to that

experienced fisherman, that it must have been like diminishing the circle of his personal acquaintance to dine upon them. These, with a neck of mutton and any pretty little tiny kickshaw, such as Justice Shallow with commendable judgment delegated to his cook, formed a light and pleasant banquet, which left the intellect clear, and temper sweet, for the rubber of threepenny whist that wound up the evening.

It was on one of these festive occasions that attention was drawn to the first of a series of remarkable objects, which seemed altogether out of keeping with the modest adornments of the Smith mansion. It was a massive silver chalice, of most beautiful workmanship, displaying three compartments, on which were represented scenes from the "taurumachia," or classic bull fights. It stood upon a blue velvet-covered pedestal, beneath a glass case, which, while it permitted a full inspection of the masterly devices on its gleaming sides, protected the exquisite object from dust or soil.

"Hallo, Jack, that's a fine thing!" remarked friend number one, suddenly awakening, as it seemed, to the merits of the "thing" to which he had been sitting opposite for half an hour. "I must put on my specs for this. Magnificent, by jingo! Look at it, Gripper. Toro—what? Was this your father's, Jack?"

Mr. Smith coloured and hesitated.

"Well, no. My father he didn't seem to care much about them sort of things; but, I say, Gripper, just you try that brown sherry. Join us, Peters, will you?"

"If I were to be guilty of the vulgarity of appraising a man's property at his own table," said Mr. Slade, the curate, "I should be disposed to affirm that the individual who became possessed of that chalice at anything under three hundred and fifty pounds, was a lucky fellow."

"Where upon earth did he get it?" said friend number three to friend number four. "I didn't give our host credit for tastes of this kind."

"Aha! There's a mystery, I take it, about that chalice," remarked the ungrateful Gripper, who, even while swallowing the brown sherry, intended to silence him, had noticed the embarrassment of the little host. "I must examine more minutely;" and he stretched out his hand towards the cup.

Smith caught him nervously by the sleeve. "Not for worlds, old fellow! Let it alone, can't you?" he gasped; and sank back into his chair with a perceptible shiver. Mr. Slade adroitly turned the conversation.

Several months passed, yet the surprise created by Mr. Smith's purchase had not wholly subsided, when a second and yet more costly object made its appearance in the drawing-room at Allsop-terrace. This time it was a gigantic vase, than which may be seen (especially in Germany) many baths of smaller dimensions. It was composed of about equal quantities of gold and silver, and was, like its predecessor,

surrounded with devices of the rarest mould—the subjects, in this case, being suggestive of stirring incidents of the chase, or war. The rich cover was crested with the design of a matador (in solid gold) giving the finishing touch to a white Andalusian bull in a frenzy of silver. It must have been worth, at the very lowest estimate, a thousand guineas.

Mr. Smith was as reticent and as embarrassed as ever, and his friends had to fall back entirely on conjecture.

What in the world did it mean? Could the donor have been some grateful patient of the deceased apothecary? But no; for why conceal what would be so honourable to all the parties concerned? Could it be that a sudden monomaniacal passion for objects of this description had possessed John Smith even to the absorption of full two years' income in a single purchase? Hardly *that*, for he was sane and shrewd enough in other things. And, besides, how would the timid, nervous little gentleman have been able to summon the courage and decision required to complete such a bargain? The curiosity on the subject grew almost into pain.

"Come now, you know; tell us, old fellow, where these gold and silver mines of yours are situated?" inquired the somewhat rough-mannered Mr. Gripper, adopting that frank tone which, indeed, was fairly his own, but was intended, on this occasion, to invite a corresponding frankness.

"I—I don't know what you mean," replied Mr. Smith, the wan smile flickering in and out of his irresolute face, like a damp wick that will not ignite kindly.

"Now, I'll tell you what, my friend," resumed Mr. Gripper, setting his teeth in the truculent manner which always warned his interlocutors that he was going to say something very unpleasant indeed, "*I see it all*."

Mr. Smith looked disturbed, but it was not the agitation of one whose secret is on the point of being discovered. On the contrary, it was with something that seemed like curiosity, that he ejaculated, with unusual emphasis:

"Then wh—what the devil *is* it?"

"There's a woman, and a woman with money, you lucky dog, in the case."

"In what case? Where?" gasped Mr. Smith, in sudden terror.

"In love with *you*, that's all!"

Mr. Smith turned deadly pale. His hair, had its constitution permitted, would have assumed an erect position.

"Heaven forbid! In love with *me*? What ever have I done? Come, Gripper, you're always ready with your chaff, *ain't* you, now?" said poor little Smith, almost piteously. "Say you're a-quizzing, now."

"Truth, John, is kindest," replied the inflexible Gripper. "It is my painful duty to arouse you to the fact that you have, wittingly or otherwise (*I am not your judge*), ensnared the affection of some confiding woman, with a good balance at her banker's, whose homage, in the form of gifts, you, with a baseness of which

I should have believed you incapable, do not scruple to accept, intending, all the while, to—to—in fact," concluded Mr. Gripper, shortly, "to throw her over."

"Over *what*? Who? Which? What *are* you talking about?" stammered poor Smith. "I wish, Gripper, you wouldn't be such a fool!"

"Fool, sir!"

"And don't talk so loud, please," continued the other, looking nervously round. "You don't know who might hear, and perhaps believe your chaff; for it *is* chaff, now, ain't it? Come, be neighbours, now, and don't let's have no more of this."

"That will wholly depend upon the course I see you adopt," said Mr. Gripper, guardedly. (He was a good-natured man, and loved a joke, but his serious manner, and a gloomy look he had the gift of assuming at pleasure, frequently imposed upon his friends.) "Now, sir, unless you think fit to communicate the whole of this nefarious plot to me, I—I will not answer for what, as a matter of honour and humanity, I may not feel bound to do."

"Plot? Whose plot? Why do you talk to me as if I was a Guy Fawkes?" pleaded poor Smith, in a tone of such distress that Mr. Gripper all but abandoned his joke.

"From whence come these magnificent presents? And why, sir, do you colour and hesitate when questioned on the matter?" retorted Gripper, sternly. "No one suspects you of having stolen them. As little could you afford to become their purchaser; and where the deuce you came by the judgment to select them, if your funds permitted, is the greatest mystery of all. There is but *one* solution; *that*, sir, which I have suggested. As man to man, I demand—yes, demand—an explanation."

Mr. Gripper folded his arms, and called up a frown of extraordinary gloom.

Perhaps he overdid it a little. Perhaps a dim consciousness that Mr. Gripper had no more business with the matter than the Tycoon of Japan, awoke, in the gentle bosom of poor little Smith, the slumbering man. At all events, with an energy he was never known to display before or since, he confronted his scowling friend, and, making the most of the niggard stature meted out to him, boldly replied:

"Then, sir, I refuse; and the sooner you can make it convenient to quit my house, the better."

"Quit your house?" echoed Mr. Gripper, dismissing his frown and joke together. "Not till I have shaken hands with one of the heartiest and pluckiest fellows in the whole range of my acquaintance. By Jove, Smith, what a spitfire you are becoming."

"Think so?" said Mr. Smith, rubbing his hands, and at once returning to good humour. "No, no."

"Couldn't you *see* that I was only chaffing you?" asked his friend; and, shortly after, took his leave, much disgusted at not having been able to discover the secret.

Greater surprises were in store. Mr. Slade,

who was rather near-sighted, was entering one evening his friend's always open hall door, when he was startled by a flash of steel and gold, and a tall menacing figure, armed with a glittering lance, seemed to be about to make a target of his breast. Mr. Slade reeled instinctively back against the door, and then perceived that his assailant was only the case of a warrior; being, in fact, a magnificent suit of Milan armour—silken surcoat and all, complete—and which, being placed across a mighty block of wood, in default of a steed, represented a knight in the tilt-yard in act to charge. A diadem encircling the wrought helm, denoted that this costly equipment had enclosed the limbs of some chivalrous prince in ages passed away.

The good curate was still rubbing his eyes, and marvelling at such an object encountered in such a place, when Mr. Smith bustled in.

"Why, Smith, what have you got here? My good friend, this is a treasure indeed!"

"Ah! I thought you'd like my Lazy Sally, and was 'oping you'd look in," replied the virtuoso. "There, you needn't go too close. It looks 'alf as well again at a distance," he added, nervously.

"Your Lazy Sally!" ejaculated Slade. "Why do you call it so?"

"Cause that's its name," retorted Mr. Smith. "Look 'ere!" and he pointed to a device and legend on the shield borne by the kingly champion.

Short-sighted Mr. Slade put on his glasses, and made out, for device, a bull's head and neck encircled by a broken chain; and, for motto, the well-known words in which the marshal of a tournament gave signal to engage: "Laissez aller."

"Lazy Sally! I said so," exclaimed the lover of art. "I wish it wasn't quite so big, though. Where ever it's to stand——"

"Why, Smith, you are collecting quite a museum?" remarked the curate. "You will want a custodian shortly."

"Well; I don't think it'll come to *that*," said Smith. "I shan't outrun the constable."

Mr. Slade laughed, and observed that his friend had slightly mistaken his meaning.

The curate's prophecy seemed likely to come true. Other objects of art continued to arrive at uncertain intervals, until not a room in the house but could boast of at least one rich and beautiful specimen, selected by a taste as pure as the expenditure it must have involved was liberal. Mr. Smith's collection arrived at the value of, at least, fifteen thousand pounds; and it was not unusual for persons in the country, who delighted in such things, to travel considerable distances to visit the accomplished proprietor, and congratulate him on his acquisitions and the refined art-knowledge which dictated their selection. The suit of Milan armour was an especial attraction, and was rendered more interesting by the circumstance that an inscription had been discovered on the breast-plate beneath the surcoat. It had, however, been purposely obliterated, and now only con-

veyed a suspicion that it had been in modern English, without affording any clue to its significance.

Thus matters went on, until the "unmoved Fates," who spare the harmless as little as the oppressor, knocked at the quiet door in Allsop-terrace, and imperatively demanded the body of Mr. John Smith.

The pretence was this. One day, towards the closing of the trout-season, when your sworn piscator grows keen and jealous of his diminishing sport, Mr. Smith—while in the heat of a life-and-death contest with a four-pound patriarch, whose time (John felt) was more than up—slipped down the bank, and into a deep pool. He was, it is true, rescued by some husbandmen and fished up, not only alive, but victorious, still holding to his prize. But the results were serious. The poor little man caught a cold that set its fangs in his delicate chest, and ultimately sucked away his life.

When conscious of his approaching end, he sent for his friend Slade, and requested him to allow himself to be named co-executor with their gossip, Tom Gripper, to carry out, among other things, a purpose he had greatly at heart. It need hardly be said that his old friend consented, and, thereupon, John Smith disburdened his mind of a little romance of private life, which may possibly be held not unworthy of a page in these records of the rolling year.

About twelve years before, and about three years subsequent to his father's death, John received a mysterious consignment, which, being opened, revealed that exquisite silver chalice which first attracted his neighbour's curiosity. A card accompanied it, on which, in a beautiful female hand, were written these words:

"To J. S. From the deeply grateful and admiring PROLL."

And, in plain but unobtrusive characters, below the rim of the chalice, was engraved:

"To the intrepid Smith."

Perplexed in the extreme, John carefully laid up the chalice, hoping that the mystery would in some manner elucidate itself, and not without fear that he might be suddenly called upon to account for appropriating what was certainly intended for another of his by no means uncommon name. And "Proll," who on earth was "Proll?" Was it Proll? Yes. There was no mistake as to the spelling. Proll might have been more natural, more familiar. No. Proll it was.

All doubts, however, were dispelled by the alarming receipt of the second present, the vase, accompanied by a note from "Proll," expressing her regret that Mr. Smith's modesty—a quality that always attends true courage—should have deterred him from exhibiting to his friends the former testimony of her gratitude and enthusiastic admiration. "I know you," Proll concluded, "John Smith, of 9, Allsop-terrace, though you know not me. And your Proll, your grateful but invisible protectress, Proll, will I remain until my dying day."

"Whatever I've done for to make anybody

so grateful," said poor little Smith, his wan smile wanner than ever, "I *can't* understand."

Slade could not help him on this point, so, to turn the conversation, asked his friend why he had evinced so marked a disinclination to having Proll's gifts closely examined?

John seemed embarrassed for a moment, then he said:

"Well, it don't matter now; so here's the truth. Some of my friends—not *you*, Slade" (affectionately pressing his hand), "have been in the 'abit of chaffing me 'cause I was a nervous sort of timid chap, and these cups and things of Proll's seemed as if they was a-chaffing too. Every one of them, you see's talking of my courage, my 'ardihood, and so forth. There's a motter on each. On the vase was written, 'To the brave, devoted Smith.' On the stomach of that harmour, was 'Tribute to death-defying 'ardihood, in the person of the noble-'arted Smith.' And so 'tis in all of 'em. Somehow, though I couldn't bring myself to believe that Proll was laughing at me in her sleeve, I knew it would set those fellows off, so I scratched out the writing on the harmour's stomach, and wouldn't let no one look too close at t'other things, you see. Now, what I want you for to do is this," continued the invalid, raising himself on the pillow. "'O' course, this is all gammon. Proll must be a lunatic. I never did her any service. How could I, as have lived quiet here, since I was born? I feel as if, I'd been taking money and gimcracks all my life from Proll's family, which may want 'em. There may be old Prolls, or little Prolls, or, in short, my good friend, I have made up my mind to leave a thumping legacy to Proll, at all events, and you must find her out if you can. I know you will try. And, if you *can't*," concluded the speaker, faintly, for he was getting wearied with his long speech, "there shall be a clause providing rewards for other brave chaps like *me*, you know," he smiled, "so that, perhaps, somehow, after all, the right J. S. may come in for one of Proll's pretty thingumbobs."

Later the same evening, as Slade again sat beside his friend, awaiting the solicitor who was to receive instructions for the intended legacy, the curate quietly revived the subject of Proll's mysterious gifts.

"You are quite *certain*—think, now, John—that you have never been in a position to render some extraordinary and timely service to this Proll?"

"Never, on my word," said Mr. Smith, emphatically.

"It is very singular," resumed Mr. Slade, pondering. "Do you know—but tell me, first, has any event of real importance, such, I mean, as would remain among the best-remembered incidents of an ordinary experience, ever occurred to you, that might, indirectly, perchance, connect itself with this enigma? Think."

John reflected.

"Except that—in June, 'forty-two—I landed——"

"Yes?" cried his friend, eagerly, observing that he paused. "You landed. How? Where?"

"In the pool, below the weir," replied Mr. Smith, faintly. "I landed him—in twenty minutes—with a single gut—brown partridge fly. He weighed nine pounds and a hounce!"

Mr. Slade fell into another reverie. Suddenly he resumed:

"It occurs to me, Smith, as not a little remarkable, that every one of these mysterious offerings contains some reference to an *ox*."

"A hox!" ejaculated the invalid. "Hox?"

"Or bull. It is an ancient sacrifice, a bull-fight in the arena, or even a crest or device, as in the armour instance. Now *that*, to my mind, has a decided significance. Did you ever—say, in your reckless youth, my friend—have a misunderstanding with a bull?"

"I!" exclaimed poor Smith. "Stay, though. With a hox, I *'ad*."

"Ha!" said the curate, brightening up; "how was that?"

"I was a walking quietly down Hollow-cross-lane, when there come a-bellering be'ind me; and a man rushed past, crying out that a hinfuriated hox had broke out, and was coming down the lane! I heard him tramping, and ran on; but there was a quickset hedge on each side, and no gate. So I made a tremendous leap, and got over."

"And were in safety?"

"Why, no," replied Mr. Smith. "The hagravating beast had previously adopted a similar course, and was in the field before me. I saw his great broad forehead, heard a shriek (but whether 'twas my own voice or somebody else's, I'm afeard to say), and, being knocked down insensible, knew nothing more, till I woke in my own 'ouse, with Hannah bathing my 'ed."

"Then the matter is as unaccountable as ever," remarked the curate, with a disappointed sigh.

The conversation was never renewed, for poor little Smith was beginning to sink, and two short days comprised all that was left of his inflexible life.

More than scrupulously did the friendly executors endeavour to fulfil the duty imposed on them; but their quest of Proll was unsuccessful. They had ceased the hopeless inquiry, and had begun to consult as to the best mode of carrying out the alternative measure provided by the will, when, one morning, a visitor sent in his card to Mr. Slade.

"Colonel Commerell."

The colonel, who appeared about forty-five, and whose countenance was bronzed by an Indian sun, was a man of stately presence, and frank, yet gentlemanly, manner.

"I am just returned, sir," he said, "from a long period of foreign service, during the latter part of which my communications with home

have been somewhat irregular. My attention has only now been directed to your advertisement, addressed to 'Proll.'"

"God bless me! are *you* Proll?" exclaimed the curate, starting from his seat.

The colonel laughed.

"Well, no," he replied. "My *wife* is. At her desire I am here to explain what, judging from the terms of your advertisement, has remained too long a mystery. So, poor Mr. Smith is gone? Well! Peace to the brave."

"Ehem," said Mr. Slade. "To be sure. Yes."

"It was an act, sir," said the colonel, enthusiastically, "worthy of the brightest age of chivalry."

"You don't say—that is, do you think so?" said Mr. Slade, cautiously.

"Indeed I do. But let me relate, in a few words, what you don't know of this matter."

("You might relate what I *do* in fewer still," thought Mr. Slade.)

"When I was a jolly young cornet," continued his visitor, "I had the good hap to engage the affections of one who—God be praised!—is still the blessing of my home. She was an only child: heiress, in prospect, of very great wealth. Her father looked to unite her to a member of the noble house with which he was already distantly connected, and, having some suspicion of our attachment, hurried Rosina off, for a time, to the residence of a relative who lived in a sequestered neighbourhood three miles from hence. Singularly enough, my regiment was ordered into this very district. Quite as remarkable was it, that my wife's father never knew of that coincidence. So palpable an interposition of fate was not to be neglected. We met as often as possible. Show myself I dared not in the quiet walks of Copfold. So Rosina mounted a rough pony, made over to her by her aunt for excursions beyond the park limits, and flew across to meet me in the willow meadows, near Hollow-cross Farm.

"On one of these occasions she had tied up her pony in the little copse, and was tripping across a field, when she was alarmed by distant shouts, and, turning, found herself within twenty yards of a furious bullock, which had plunged through a gap in the hedge, and was making directly for her. She had given herself up for lost, when a man—a little man, too—with a desperate bound, cleared the hedge, and threw himself between her and the raging animal! That prompt and generous action probably saved her life. She was preserved. So was *he*! for the farm people were at hand, and Rosina, from behind the hedge, could perceive

that, though knocked down, her champion was not gored, and was receiving all the assistance his case demanded.

"Well, sir, the interposition of friends reconciled Rosina's father to my suit. We were married, my wife receiving a magnificent dowry. One of the first uses she made of it was to commence that series of grateful offerings, which doubtless reached their destination. The mystery was rendered necessary by my wife's unwillingness to let it be known how indifferently that dear old lady at Copfold had fulfilled the office of her keeper. Hence, she adopted for her name a nursery appellation, which has, you will observe, about as striking a resemblance to the real one, as such pet names usually bear. Poor, gallant Smith! Well, well! The remembrance of such an act of heroism may—modest as he was—have brought with it a certain sense of satisfaction. Yet, had any one whispered so much in his dying ear, he would probably have faltered out: 'Merely my duty.'"

Mr. Slade coughed.

"Courage, colonel, I have heard, is constitutional, and——"

"I don't know about that," returned the colonel. "For my own part, though I have seen a shot or two, and stood my ground no worse, I hope, than others;—if I saw a mad bull preparing to charge, hang me if I shouldn't be inclined to turn tail, provided there was cover at hand!" And the colonel looked as little like a man who would keep his word herein, as he could well look.

"I am at least certain," said Mr. Slade, in a low voice, "that had our departed friend been more fully sensible of the service he had rendered, he would have felt deeply grateful for having been the instrument of so providential a deliverance."

"As meek as he was intrepid, eh?" said Colonel Commerell. "A beautiful combination! And now let me complete my mission. Proll, that is, Mrs. Commerell, positively refuses to hear of 'anything to her advantage,' resulting from Mr. Smith's will, save the gratification of knowing that the brave fellow remembered her. Your solicitor, whom I saw in my way hither, favoured me with a copy of the codicil. My wife will most gladly co-operate with you in carrying out the admirable object of rewarding deeds of self-devotion. It is a thing we rarely do in England, where duty—no matter to what extreme it be carried—is popularly, though I think erroneously, believed to provide its own reward."

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VOLUME THE SEVENTEENTH.

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MABEL'S PROGRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER V. THE PRINCESS PUTS MORE COTTON IN HER EARS.

OLD Lady Popham, never very reticent in her speech, was especially confidential with Geraldine O'Brien; and the latter had not been very long in Dublin before her godmother had told her the whole story of Clement Charlewood's visit to Cloncoolin, and of his strong disapproval of the idea of a marriage between the pretty "Ophelia" and Alfred Trescott.

"I heard he had been to see you, fairy godmother," said Geraldine.

"Oh, you did? Well now, wasn't it an odd proceeding, child? Not his coming to see me. That, under the circumstances, was quite natural, and I'm sure I was charmed, and all that kind of thing. But the extraordinary motive of his visit—for he told me with refreshing candour that he had not made the journey to Cloncoolin on my account! I declare, I thought at first that the man was in love with 'Ophelia' himself. But he denied it when I asked him, point blank."

It may be remarked, in passing, that this was one of those inaccuracies to which Lady Popham in her impulsiveness was liable. Clement, in his conversation with her, had merely asserted that he was not engaged to Miss Bell.

Miss O'Brien looked up with a bright blush on her cheek: "Did he, fairy godmother?"

"Yes, indeed he did. So I could only attribute his interference to a much less excusable motive—enmity to young Trescott. I don't like stabbing people in the back. Why should he try to injure the young fellow with me?"

"I'm quite sure that Cle—, that Mr. Charlewood would stab no one in the back, my lady," said Geraldine, indignantly.

"Andiamo, andiamo, signorina mia! But I tell you he did it. Yes; he did it. Told me all sorts of bad things about Alfred. And why should he interfere? If he isn't in love with Miss What's-her-name himself, his motive must have been hatred to young Trescott, as I said."

"He may have a friendly interest in the young lady, godmamma."

"Friendly fiddlestick! A young man of his

age don't act Mentor to a pretty girl like Miss Thingammy from friendly interest. Che! che! I have lived seventy years in this queer world, Geraldina mia, and I've seen a good many queer things in it, but I never saw *that* yet! Besides," added the old lady, fanning herself violently, as she was wont to do when excited, "besides, even granting his friendly interest, for the sake of argument, there can be no good reason why he should object to his friend's marrying Alfred Trescott. It would be a highly suitable match."

"It seems so, certainly, so far as we know."

"As far as we know! Why, of course, I know all about it. Alfred is a genius—a genius, I tell you. And the girl, too, is very clever and charming, and likely to do well. Both young, both ambitious, both artists; it is perfect! quite perfect!" said Lady Popham, working herself up into one of her accustomed fits of enthusiasm.

"Yes," replied Miss O'Brien, thoughtfully; "Mr. Alfred Trescott is very clever, no doubt; but I'm not at all sure that I should like my—my sister, for example, to entrust her happiness to his keeping."

"Your sister!" cried my lady, stopping short in a quick restless promenade up and down the long drawing-room. "*Your* sister! Ah, ce serait tout autre chose!"

Geraldine made no answer, but she thought within herself that Clement Charlewood would probably refuse to admit the existence of any such wide and necessary distinction between his friend Miss Bell and Miss O'Brien's hypothetical sister. There had been, for some time, a desire growing in Geraldine's mind to make the personal acquaintance of this girl, the mention of whose name had caused such commotion at Bramley Manor; and Carlo Bensa's visit to Merriion-square furnished her with the link necessary for her purpose. Lady Popham had never been accustomed to put any restraint upon the promptings of her curiosity with regard to the private history of her artistic protégés; and Signor Bensa's Italian nature was rather flattered than offended by the lively interest manifested by "miladi" in his family affairs. He could understand reserve and concealment upon points which he had an interest in keeping secret; but the idea of a reticence which had for its object merely the avoidance of a too easy familiarity with persons for whom

he neither felt nor professed affection, was to him, as it would be to most Italians, completely inconceivable. He therefore chattered on with perfect good humour about his wife, and his baby, and his pupils, and his prospects, and his wife's cousin, Miss Bell, who was so clever and so good, and so much beloved by them all. And after Lady Popham had given him all the necessary instructions about the arrangement of the forthcoming concert, she proceeded to sound him a little as to his knowledge of Alfred Trescott's private character. But here she found herself suddenly baffled. The vivacious little man lost no particle of his vivacity, no sparkle from his eye, no brightness from his smile, but one might as well have attempted to grasp a will-o'-the-wisp as to get at his real opinion of the young fiddler. And yet Carlo Bensa could not be said to be a guileful man. He was good hearted and well intentioned. But to his mind and conscience the case was clear: "miladi" had taken a great fancy to the handsome Alfredo. Benissimo! She was a great lady, and could afford to indulge her caprices. Carlo Bensa might indirectly be benefited by "miladi's" patronage of this unknown artist. Benissimo again! He (Carlo) would do his best and earn his money honestly; but that he was to imperil his place in "miladi's" good graces, and risk losing a good engagement for the sake of expressing his candid opinion that Alfred Trescott was a selfish, idle, dissipated young rascal, incomplete as an artist, and hateful as a man—che! che! Was he a fool, or an Englishman, that he should do this thing? But about "Miss Bell," there was no such feeling. Of her he could talk heartily and frankly; and when Miss O'Brien, alleging as an excuse her family connexion with some very old and intimate friends of Miss Bell's at Hammerham, proposed to do herself the pleasure of calling on that young lady, Carlo Bensa undertook to say that his wife's cousin would feel much pleased and flattered by such a visit.

It was arranged between Lady Popham and Geraldine that the latter should avail herself of the opportunity of her morning ride—which she was accustomed to take at a quiet early hour, attended only by an old servant—to call upon Miss Bell. To her Aunt Dawson Miss O'Brien said very little about the proposed visit. That frigid lady shook her head, and shut her lips closely, when Geraldine told her she was going to see "Augusta's old friend and school-fellow."

"She is no longer a friend of my daughter-in-law, Geraldine," said Mrs. Dawson. "I must say that I thought Augusta expressed herself very properly about the young person that day at Hammerham."

"I did not think so, Aunt Dawson; but that's no matter. Lady Popham sees no objection to my going to call on this young lady."

Geraldine was quite aware that Mrs. Dawson would not put herself in open opposition to any proceeding that Lady Popham might choose to approve of. It was her *duty*, Mrs. Dawson told

herself, and told other people, to keep Geraldine's rich godmother in as good humour as might be.

On the morning of the day on which Clement Charlewood had had the conversation with Penelope recorded in my last chapter, and had also visited Mrs. Saxelby at Hazelhurst, Miss O'Brien, followed by her old groom, rode quietly into Kelly's-square, where Mrs. Walton lived. Carlo Bensa had prepared Mabel for the visit. It was impossible to decline to see Miss O'Brien, even had there been time to do so; but Mabel would have given much to avoid receiving her.

Aunt Mary and Uncle John, quite unconscious of this feeling on their niece's part, were much pleased by the kind message that Bensa had brought, and by his report of the interest Lady Popham and Miss O'Brien had shown in Mabel.

"I think it very nice, indeed, of the young lady," said Mrs. Walton, "and a very becoming attention to so old and intimate a friend of the family that her cousin has married into. I think Miss O'Brien's polite behaviour puts to shame Mr. Walter Charlewood altogether. He has never taken any notice of you, Mabel dear, since he has been in Dublin. And you on such intimate terms with his family, almost like one of themselves!"

For Mrs. Walton had learned much about the Charlewoods, and about Mabel's intimacy at Bramley Manor, from Alfred Trescott. And though poor Mabel sometimes writhed under her aunt's speeches on the subject, she could not affect to deny the facts of the case. All she could do was to assure Aunt Mary that her going on the stage had put a stop to all familiar intercourse between herself and the rich, prosperous Hammerham magnates.

"I don't see why it should, at all," said Aunt Mary, stoutly. But then John Earnshaw had patted his wife's hand, and reminded her, smilingly, of the old lady in the Orkney Islands, who had found it necessary to renounce her third cousin, whom she had never seen, in consequence of his marriage with an actress.

The clatter of horses' hoofs in the square brought Janet to the window.

"Here is your visitor, Mabel," she said. "Jack, tell Catty to show the lady into the little parlour, there's a good boy. She's a fine, well-made girl, father, in a dark-blue habit, and riding a very pretty bay horse. The groom is quite an old man, and, as far as I can tell, better mounted than his mistress."

Mabel rose slowly and reluctantly, laying down a book from which she was studying. She was dressed with scrupulous neatness, and her rich dark hair was bound up in a multitude of shining plaits at the back of her head, but her gown was of very cheap and somewhat worn brown stuff.

"Why didn't you put on your black silk, Mabel?" said Aunt Mary, solicitously regarding her.

"It doesn't matter, dear auntie."

"Doesn't Mabel look nice, then?" asked Mr. Earnshaw.

"She always looks nice," pronounced Janet, decisively, as her cousin closed the door behind her.

Mabel paused with her hand on the banisters, feeling her limbs tremble beneath her. "*Why am I such a coward?*" she asked herself, almost fiercely; and the next moment she had opened the parlour door and stood in the presence of her visitor.

Geraldine O'Brien, with her bright cheek flushed with exercise, her blue eyes beaming with health, and the chesnut gloss of her hair, heightened by contrast with the black feather that drooped from her riding-hat, seemed to Mabel's eyes a very lovely creature, as she stood in the full flood of the morning sunshine that poured in from the window. Geraldine, on her part, observed every detail of the slight graceful figure and pale face that remained for one instant framed in the open doorway before her, with the rapidity of true womanly perception. "She is *not* handsome," was the Irish girl's first thought; but as she advanced and held out her hand, a delicate flush came into Mabel's pale cheek, her lips parted in a faint sweet smile, and the liquid grey eyes were raised candidly. "Yes, she is, though," was the contrary verdict formed in the second that sufficed to make those changes in the face she was looking upon. "This is a pleasure I have long been wishing for, Miss—Miss Earnshaw. I hope you don't consider it a liberty my not calling you by the name you assume at present."

"I prefer my own name under all circumstances," said Mabel, "and it was not by my own wish that I assumed another."

"I hope Signor Bensa was kind enough to explain to you, Miss Earnshaw, that it was he who, in a measure, gave me leave to call upon you at this unusual hour?"

"Thank you; Carlo knows that my occupations are so constant and engrossing that I cannot be sure of any but the early morning hours."

Struggle as she would to maintain her self-possession, Mabel was conscious of an unusual flutter in her manner, and of a wandering attention. She, who was naturally and habitually simple and straightforward, could not regard Miss O'Brien with unalloyed simplicity and straightforwardness. In truth, she was not looking at her or speaking to her for herself, but with a constant reference to Clement Charlewood. That was the voice, those were the eyes, the smiles, the ways, the words that had pleased him!

"My godmother, Lady Popham, desired me to say for her, that she would have been so glad to come with me and to make your acquaintance, but she is so busy at this moment that it was impossible."

Mabel bowed silently.

"If you knew Lady Popham, Miss Earnshaw, you would understand how wonderfully she gives herself up to anything that interests her. And

just now she is so busy and so occupied about this concert."

"Oh yes; the concert," said Mabel, absently. She was recalling the tone of voice in which Clement had whispered to her, "*I love you, Mabel,*" on that night in the Eastfield inn, and wondering vaguely whether he had spoken so to the brilliant, lively girl before her.

"It takes place to-night, you know," Geraldine proceeded: "my lady will have it in her own drawing-rooms at Merion-square. At first they thought of taking some public hall for the purpose, but there were so many difficulties, that—but why am I saying all this to you, who, of course, know all the particulars!"

"I? No, truly. I did not know. I am so constantly employed myself. But I wish Mr. Alfred Trescott all success: he is very fortunate in having such kind friends."

Geraldine O'Brien opened her blue eyes widely for an instant, and stared at Mabel. This was an odd tone for one whom young Trescott had spoken of as almost his affianced bride! "Either the lady or the gentleman is a most amazing humbug, that's all I have to say!" thought the frank-hearted Irish girl; "and I'd lay odds it's that handsome, snaky-eyed Alfredo that fairy godmother is coiffée with at this minute."

But Mabel made it apparent that, from whatever motive, she did not speak willingly about Mr. Alfred Trescott, and Miss O'Brien was too well bred to persist in a topic that was evidently distasteful.

"There is an old friend of yours here now, Miss Earnshaw," she said, changing the subject.

"An old friend of mine?"

"Yes; Walter Charlewood. You know, of course, that he is half a cousin of mine now."

"I was glad to hear of Augusta's marriage."

"Malachi Dawson, her husband, is a very good sort of fellow, and I think they will get on very well together. As his cousin, I may be allowed to say that I look upon it as a very good match for *him*. They are in Italy for the winter, have you heard?"

"Miss O'Brien, I never hear from any of the family now. Not that I complain of that in the least," added Mabel, proudly; "I chose for myself a path that naturally carries me further and further away from any chance of communication with people like the Charlewoods. And I wanted to say—I scarcely know whether you will understand me—but I wanted to tell you that, without anger or fault on either side, circumstances have sundered the course of my life from theirs completely. I wished you to know this clearly, because—because—you might, perhaps, suppose that you were showing kindness towards your friends at Bramley Manor in visiting me, and I should not like to accept your courtesies upon false pretences."

So slight, so young, so tender as she looked, with the colour fluttering in her face and a nervous tremor in the clear sweet voice, and yet with such an indomitable spirit, so strong a resolution animating her girlish frame!

"My dear Miss Earnshaw!" cried Geraldine, impulsively taking her by the hand and kissing her forehead, "I came to see you to do a kindness to a person that I've a considerable regard for, and that's myself. Sure, why wouldn't we like each other on our own account? I never make friends by proxy, and I don't believe you do either!"

"Thanks," said Mabel, smiling; and the thought in her mind, as she looked at the winning face blooming out under the shadow of the riding-hat, was, "She is very sweet. It is quite natural he should love her."

"Now, I hope you'll let me come and see you again—may I?—and make Mrs. Saxelby's acquaintance. Signor Bensa told us you were expecting your mamma."

"I hope mamma will be here to-morrow or the next day, at latest."

"Well, good-bye. I mustn't let my idleness steal any minutes from your industry. Oh, and I had nearly forgot to deliver my message! Godmamma—Lady Popham—sends you many kind compliments, and she hopes you will not fail to let her know when your benefit is coming off at the theatre, because she means to be present, and to give as many of her friends as she can muster the great pleasure of seeing you too."

"She is very good. I will let her know if such a thing comes off."

Mabel spoke more heartily than she had yet done. The frank recognition of her professional position was agreeable to her, and Miss O'Brien's manner was perfect; equally free from any attempt at patronage, and the still more offensive affectation of condescending familiarity.

"Oh, of course it will come off! You're making wonderful progress in public favour here, Miss Earnshaw. I could tell you heaps of fine things that I hear said about you, only I'm a little afraid of you, do you know?"

"Afraid of me?" Mabel looked up with such undisguised child-like wonder in her eyes, that Geraldine burst into a hearty fit of laughter.

"Oh," she said, archly, "you needn't look so astonished, as if nobody ever was afraid of you before! You've just a quiet way of icing yourself at a minute's notice, that is quite enough to terrify hot-headed Irish folks like me. I'm sorry you can't be at this famous concert to-night; but I know you'll be acting, Mr. Alfred Trescott told us so."

"Did he?"

"Yes: by the way, what has Lady Popham's protégé done to offend Mr. Clement Charlewood?"

Mabel felt the blood rush to her face.

"To offend Mr. Clement Charlewood?"

"Yes; I don't mean to tell tales out of school, but the other day, when Clement was at Cloncoolin, he spoke very severely of young Trescott to my lady. I think, if there's any misunderstanding between them, you might, perhaps, put it right with a word or two."

"I put it right! Oh, Miss O'Brien, it is out of the question. I don't even understand——"

The two girls were now at the street door, and the old groom, perceiving his mistress, cantered briskly up from the other end of the square.

"Well," said Geraldine, "perhaps I had better have held my tongue; but I hope, at least, I have done no mischief. Good-bye, Miss Earnshaw. Pray don't remain one moment at the door."

Miss O'Brien sprang into her saddle and rode off, waving her hand to Mabel as she went. As soon as she had disappeared, the latter ran into the parlour again, shut the door, and sat down at the table leaning her head upon her hands. Clement had been to Cloncoolin! Been so near to her, and had made no sign. Was this the true, constant friendship he had promised? Why, too, did this girl speak to her of Alfred Trescott, and suggest the possibility of her—Mabel's—interference between young Trescott and Clement Charlewood? What did it all mean? She longed to sit still and solitary, and to think of it all, and to fix Geraldine O'Brien's words and looks in her memory; and to picture her with Clement; and—but some one tapped at the parlour door, and Catty put her head in and begged Miss Mabel to go to "the mistress." And then Aunt Mary had a great many things to say about the week's business, and consultations about a dress for "Viola" were held, and there were two new parts to study, and, in short, the old necessity for sternly refusing to indulge private and personal feelings, in presence of the great duties of life and of art, showed itself to Mabel unmistakably under manifold aspects. She answered a few questions—which they all had too much delicacy to make importunate—put by her aunt and cousins about her recent visitor, and then set herself steadily to her work. The hill was getting steeper and steeper as she mounted, and there on the summit above her head bloomed the singing-tree, and talked the fairy bird, and flowed the golden water. "If it were only for myself," said Mabel, "I *must* stop and look back, and listen to the voices. But mamma, and Dooley—little Dooley! The sweet, loving, fatherless little fellow!" And then the young head bent itself again resolutely to the task before it.

"I shall rest and look back, by-and-by," she said. "By-and-by."

CHAPTER VI. LADY POPHAM'S CONCERT.

THE assemblage of persons who filled Lady Popham's drawing-room in Merriion-square on that same Tuesday evening on which Clement Charlewood was tramping homeward from Hazlehurst with a heavy heart, and drawing nearer and nearer to the angry flare on the night sky over Hammerham, was composed of members of the most brilliant and fashionable society then in Dublin. Silks rustled, jewels sparkled, delicate perfumes filled the air. There was a liberal sprinkling of bright uniforms amongst the audience, for Walter Charlewood had worked zealously amongst his brother-officers, in obedi-

ence to her ladyship's commands, feeling that such commands were very glorious to him, and conferred a high distinction. And Arthur Skidley was present, and had even whispered a vague hint of the possibility of the concert being honoured by the presence of his excellency in person. To which my Lady Popham had replied briefly, "Tant mieux if he comes, for Alfred's sake. But the fact is, his excellency is no connoisseur. I wouldn't give anything for his opinion, you know, Arthur. I used to know him years ago when he was quite a young fellow at Naples; and he never appreciated poor Pizzicati the least in the world."

Pizzicati had been one of Lady Popham's numerous "geniuses," who was confidently expected to eclipse Rossini, but didn't.

The rooms filled up rapidly. The company was seated chiefly in the large drawing-room opposite to the widely opened folding-doors, but there were a few seats arranged in the second apartment of the suite, around a clear space in the centre of which stood a grand pianoforte, and where the performers were to be stationed. The third and smallest drawing-room was used as a retiring-room for the artists. Within this third room now stood Signor Bensa and Alfred Trescott. The latter was dressed with scrupulous care and even elegance. Ugly and unbecoming as a modern gentleman's evening costume is usually considered, it must be owned that the plain black coat and white neckcloth set off Alfred's clear olive-coloured face to advantage; and no one could have seen the young man that evening without being struck by the remarkable beauty of his face, and the lithe picturesque grace of his figure. In one corner of the room, seated in an easy-chair, was a very stout, florid lady, glistening with ornaments, and attired in very splendid garments, made in so outré and elaborate a manner, as is rarely seen except in those highly coloured works of art that illustrate the fashion-books. This was Madame Olga Boschka, a concert-singer of recent fame from London, who had been engaged, at Lady Popham's expense, to give additional éclat to her protégé's début. Madame Boschka sang in almost all European languages, but spoke none of them, except English, fluently. Her nationality was for a long time doubtful; but at length it was announced, on her own authority, that Madame Olga Boschka was a native of Wallachia. One ill-natured critic, remarking on her singular pronunciation of the English language, averred that he had heard something very like it in Lancashire. But everybody else overwhelmed him with indignant asseverations that Madame Boschka's accent was purely and unmistakably Wallachian. So perhaps it was. This magnificent lady was attended by a meagre little woman in shabby attire, whose position appeared to be undefined—bordering sometimes on the confidential lady's-maid's, and anon partaking of the poor relation's. Her chief office appeared to be to solicit Madame Olga Boschka to partake of refreshment, which solicitings, coming from so spare a creature to

one so evidently well-fed and robust as the distinguished contralto, had rather a comic character. There were also present four gentlemen belonging to the "Calliopean Choristers," a celebrated metropolitan glee and madrigal society. But they kept apart, and indulged in considerable hilarity of a private and personal nature, consisting chiefly of explosive bursts of laughter at certain choice anecdotes relating to various professional persons distinguished by nicknames, which anecdotes might have been entertaining had one possessed the key to them; but, wanting that, were "caviare to the general."

The concert began with a glee by the jolly "Calliopeans," which was—as indeed was a great proportion of the music selected by that cheerful choir—of a sentimental, not to say lugubrious, character. And when the alto, a very fat short man, declared in a thin piping tone that "For Chloe" he was "dy-y-ying," the effect upon several young subalterns placed within range of Lady Popham's awful eye-glass was extremely trying. Then came a scena in Italian, executed by Madame Olga Boschka, in a mellifluous smothered voice, that suggested a nightingale singing through a feather-bed. And then—the hero of the evening, the *bénéficiaire*, Mr. Alfred Trescott, appeared, fiddle in hand, long-haired, bright-eyed, pale, interesting, everything that the most romantic could desire. After him trotted little Carlo Bensa, his quick eyes and ugly intelligent face taking in every particular of the appearance and manner of such of the audience as came within range of his vision; and glancing hither and thither, whilst his hands were busied with the arrangement of his music on the pianoforte, with the sort of melancholy and grave vivacity which I have seen characterise a trained monkey on a barrel-organ.

Alfred had chosen his first piece cunningly, if not with the soaring ambition of a classical musician. He had selected De Beriot's fifth "air varié," one of the most graceful compositions of a graceful composer, who thoroughly understood the instrument he wrote for. Alfred had understood his own strength and his own weakness in making the selection. The purity of tone, general certainty of intonation, and singular delicate pathos (which was so startlingly at variance with the coarse cynicism of his moral nature) that distinguished his playing, were all advantageously displayed, whilst no overwhelming demand was made upon his mechanical resources. Everything concurred to encourage and animate him to excel; and he played with great effect, and produced a marked impression. Perhaps some portion of the praise and applause he received was due to the audience finding him much better than they had expected; for Lady Popham's eccentric pursuit of geniuses was pretty well known amongst her friends, and any announcement of a new protégé was apt to be received with cold incredulity of his merits.

Lady Popham was in ecstasies. She led the applause and the "bravos," and at the conclusion of the *bénéficiaire's* first piece she went

skipping about amongst the audience, and ex-patiating volubly upon the exquisite performance they had just listened to. In short, Alfred Trescott drank deep of the sweet intoxicating draught of public flattery that night. At the conclusion of the concert, Lady Popham retained a select number of her most favoured friends to supper; and when the main stream of company had found its way down-stairs, and had departed with much shouting of amateur link-men, and clapping to of carriage steps, and rumbling of wheels, the privileged guests were shown into the dining-room, brilliant with a profusion of lights, and gay with hothouse flowers, where a very substantial repast awaited them. Alfred Trescott was there, of course, and Carlo Bensa, of whose steady unobtrusive services as accompanist and conductor, my lady made ample acknowledgment. An invitation to remain and sup had also been given to Madame Boschka, but that lady had excused herself, on the ground that she had to start early the following morning on a professional tour through "Hireland" (that being, it seems, Wallachian for the Emerald Isle), and had majestically departed, wrapped in furs by the hands of her assiduous attendant. There remained, besides Alfred and Bensa, Mrs. Dawson, Geraldine O'Brien, a very deaf dowager with two pale daughters, Arthur Skidley, Walter Charlewood, two or three young officers whom he had pressed into the service, and the colonel commanding Walter's regiment. Colonel Rose was an old Indian officer, tall, dry, and brown, and had been especially invited to join what Lady Popham delighted to call her "artist's *petit souper*," on the strength of his playing the flute and being a great amateur of music. The supper progressed merrily. As the champagne began to exhilarate the party, compliments more and more flattering, and predictions of future glory, flew about Alfred Trescott's delighted ears. He was to be the Paganini of the day, he was to charm the metropolis and amaze the country. In the middle of the feast, a servant brought in a large mysterious packet and laid it before my lady. The brisk old woman rose up in her place, and calling on the company to charge their glasses, made a speech proposing the health of her young friend Alfred Trescott, whose genius had that evening entranced them all. The proceeding was a rather *prononcé* one, and one or two of the guests looked a little astonished at my lady's eloquence. But she had long ceased to regard any such astonishment, and, indeed, perhaps delighted to provoke it. The queer little body took a great pride in what she considered anti-English demonstrations of this kind, although in the important matters of life—such, for example, as a matrimonial alliance for any of her relatives—she would have displayed as insular a contempt for the foreigner as any blue-blooded Anglo-Norman of them all. Walter Charlewood, who was seated next to the deaf dowager, had the honour of repeating my lady's speech to her, word for word as it was spoken. He was beaming with pleasure; for

the deaf dowager was an earl's widow, and Walter overheard her say to her neighbour on the other side—as it is possible she intended he should hear, for the wealth of Gandry and Charlewood was not unknown in that part of the world, and the two pale daughters had been out five seasons—that that young man, Skidley's friend, was exceedingly "good style." Then the mysterious packet was opened, and found to contain a very fine Guarnerius violin, which Lady Popham, with her own generous little hand, presented to Alfred Trescott. The enthusiasm was at its height, when the door was opened hastily, and my lady's butler, a staid, responsible man, came behind Walter Charlewood's chair, and whispered in his ear with a disturbed countenance.

"For me? Are you sure?" said Walter, rising and turning pale.

"Quite sure, sir. Your servant sent him on here from the barracks."

Young Charlewood left the room, muttering some confused and unintelligible apology to his hostess, and Lady Popham turned anxiously to the butler, who still lingered in the room.

"What is it, Mitchell? Anything the matter?"

"It's a telegraphic message from England, my lady. Coming so late, and all, I'm afraid there's bad news."

The sound of a heavy fall in the entrance-hall outside the dining-room made every one start to their feet and hurry to the door. Colonel Rose, prompt and cool, headed the party, and almost before they had seen what was the matter, he had raised Walter Charlewood in his arms, and laid him on a large settee that stood in the hall.

"He has fainted," said Colonel Rose. "Don't crowd round him. One of you boys loosen his neckcloth whilst I hold up his head."

"Where's my maid? Get some *eau-de-Cologne*! Take him into my own room. Send somebody for a doctor!" screamed Lady Popham, excitedly. "Can't I do anything for him?"

"Nothing at all, but be quiet. You'd better go back to the dining-room, and take the other women with you," said Colonel Rose, unceremoniously. "He'll be all right in a few minutes."

Lady Popham obeyed immediately. "You're quite right, Colonel," she said, hurrying off. "We're doing no good here. Poor boy!" she added, when she and her female guests had returned to the dining-room. "He has had some terrible shock. What can it be?"

"His father is dying," said Mrs. Dawson, "and he is sent for to go home instantly. Here is the telegram."

Mrs. Dawson, with characteristic caution and coolness, had picked up the telegraphic despatch from the ground where Walter had let it fall when he swooned. The message ran thus:

"From John Stephens, Hammerham, to Walter Charlewood, —th Regiment of Foot, Dublin. Your father not expected to recover.

Great trouble. Come at once." And it was dated 10.50 P.M. that same evening.

"Poor boy, poor boy! How awfully sudden," said my lady, wiping the ready tears from her eyes.

Geraldine O'Brien had sunk into a chair, and sat silent, covering her face with her hands.

"It is a terrible shock for Malachi and Augusta on their wedding tour," observed Mrs. Dawson, in an aggrieved voice. "I hope and trust Mr. Charlewood had made all the testamentary arrangements that he explained to me his intention of doing."

Presently Colonel Rose returned, and the other men dropped in one by one, and stood awkwardly at the door.

"He will be better directly, Lady Popham," said the colonel. "Don't alarm yourself. It's lucky, as things have turned out, that I happened to be here, for Charlewood tells me that his father is dying, and he must start for home at once, and I can give him his leave without more ado. I'll take him with me in my carriage, and see that he's got ready to start by the first train. I hope he may find things better than he fears."

The colonel took his leave, and departed with Walter Charlewood, who sent in a message to Lady Popham expressing his farewell to her, and excuses for not seeing her again.

The deaf dowager made many inquiries of Arthur Skidley, as the latter attended her to her carriage.

"This young man is not the eldest son, then?" said the dowager.

"No; but he's his father's favourite, and old Charlewood is one of those iniquitously rich fellows who'll cut up handsomely enough for them all."

"And those sort of people can always leave their property as they like."

"Charlewood can leave his just as he likes."

"Poor young man! Tell him, Mr. Skidley, how distressed we were about him."

Alfred Trescott and Carlo Bensa walked part of the way towards their respective homes together, the former smoking a cigar, and carrying under one arm the Guarnerius, which he told Lady Popham, enthusiastically, should never quit his side.

"Deuced wet blanket that message coming just then, when everything was going so well, wasn't it?" said Alfred.

"Very wet blanket for the poor young man, the soldier," returned his companion.

"Oh yes; but of course he'd have *had* to get it, anyhow. That couldn't be helped; whereas, without my having any concern in the matter, I came in for a share in the nuisance, don't you see?"

"I see. Oh yes, I see."

"Well, you ain't over and above enthusiastic, Bensa," resumed Alfred, after they had walked some yards in silence. "You haven't said a word about the concert or about my playing. One would fancy you weren't best pleased at my success!"

They had now arrived at a street lamp, the light from which fell full upon Alfred's face. The Italian stopped short and looked at him.

"I think you have great success," he said. "Very great success. To say the truth, I was thinking of what you call the wet blanket. I am sorry. My wife's cousin knows these people well. She will be grieved. But you have great success; very great success. Good night. This is my way home. Oh yes, without doubt, great success." And Carlo Bensa walked rapidly away.

"Little sneak!" sneered Alfred, jerking away the end of his cigar, and stopping under the lamp-post to take out and light another. "Little sneak! He's jealous. So my friend, the hodman's father, is dropping off the hooks. Well, the hodman 'll have all the bricks and mortar to himself now." Suddenly a thought appeared to strike him, and his handsome face darkened into a black frown. "Yes," he muttered, "I was a fool not to think of that before. The chances are he *won't* stick to it now he can do as he likes, but still—I'll see her to-morrow. Coming with all this fuss, and praise, and success fresh on me—and Bensa, whether he likes it or not, can't but say that I made a great hit—she'll acknowledge, at all events, that I'm in earnest, and disinterested, and all that."

BOOK ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE Art of book-illustration is, just now, passing through a curious phase. When George Cruikshank, or Hablot Brown, two artists whose names are here associated solely for chronological reasons, had to make the illustrations to a work of fiction, it would seem to have been their practice to select as subjects all the most dramatic situations, whether of a comic or tragic sort, which were treated of in the narrative. On the one hand, violent encounters, terrible accidents, exciting adventures, crises through which the characters described in the book were compelled to pass; on the other, situations characterised by their extreme absurdity, in which the persons represented were shown in a ridiculous light, or exhibited under laughable circumstances—these were almost invariably the themes chosen for illustration. Their ambition appears to have been to put the more remarkable scenes described by the author, before the reader's eyes, rather than to display their own artistic powers.

But this principle has got to be now regarded as antiquated and obsolete. Our modern men appear to occupy themselves less with the thing to be done than with the manner of doing it. Their ambition seems to be confined to the desire of producing a beautiful work of art. The modern illustrator, when a book is put into his hands, proposes to himself—judging by results—rather to produce a set of drawings which shall redound to his own credit, than to help the author whose work he illustrates, to

make himself understood. The consequence is, that he ordinarily chooses those situations which are the tamest and least dramatic, because they fetter him less, and lend themselves more readily to his purpose of producing a complete and agreeable picture, than those more stirring situations which both the author and the public would have liked to see illustrated.

A large proportion of the drawings with which such works are embellished represent scenes wholly devoid of action or stir. Two or three people seated round a table, partaking of a meal; a couple of young fellows chatting over their wine; a lady showing a picture-book to her little girl; lovers in pairs, without end; single figures, also without end; young ladies reading love-letters, or overwhelmed with some piece of ill news just received.

It must be acknowledged, at starting, that the execution of such drawings as are here spoken of is, in many cases, well-nigh faultless. The figures are evidently drawn elaborately from nature. They are well placed, both as to attitude and as to their relative positions with regard to each other. Nor are the accessories neglected. If the scene represented take place in a room, the objects about the room are well copied; if a landscape be introduced, this also is well studied, and is often a pretty picture in itself. Yet, admitting all this, at times one gets weary of these well-executed nothings; these well-written tales without story; these harmonious symphonies destitute of tune.

The designs of Gustave Doré exhibit qualities widely different from those which are chiefly conspicuous in the ordinary book-illustrations of our day. They give scope to the wildest flights of the imagination, and make larger demands on the fancy of the artist than on his realistic powers. It is indeed in dreaming of what is fanciful, rather than in representing what is real, that Gustave Doré excels. Selecting the illustrated edition of *Don Quixote* as the particular specimen of his powers to be here considered, it is impossible not to be struck by the marked general inferiority of those designs in which the artist has sought to represent facts, to those in which he has dealt with fancies. When occupied with these, he seems to be free and at his ease. He works unfettered and achieves always something, and occasionally a great deal; while, whenever it becomes a question of realities, his numerous inaccuracies, and—for a Frenchman—his remarkable defects in drawing, are painfully conspicuous. Some of these fact-illustrations are relieved by a touch of humour which redeems them a little; but many are simply bad, and common-place to an extent which, considering the striking originality by which the more fanciful designs of the artist are often characterised, is really curious.

There are some specimens in the *Don Quixote* which are worthy of special notice. The large woodcut, representing the knight and squire riding along among the hill-tops in the early morning, is one of these. That most tender light

of sunrise has been caught here with wonderful success; you never doubt about it as you look. The idea of such freshness and coolness is conveyed to your senses, and the light is at once so brilliant and so faint, that, although the shadows are as long as afternoon shadows are, and the sun is low behind the far-off mountains, yet no one could mistake this for a sunset scene, or suppose that the day was ending instead of beginning. The exhilaration of the time of day is, indeed, so great, that even *Rozinante* is getting over the ground at a good pace, while *Sancho*, with his face turned up towards his master, and at the same time towards the rising sun, listens to the glowing promises of the knight, with the most rapturous credulity, revelling mentally in the prospect of an island to govern, and corporeally in the warmth of the morning sunbeams. This picture is roughly and even coarsely executed; the mechanical contrivances of the engraver are everywhere conspicuous; yet there is a sentiment about the whole which makes one ready to forgive anything, and to accept the ruled lines by which the mountain mists are rendered, for the opal tints of earliest dawn.

Somewhat akin to this design is another illustrating one of those high-flown descriptions of the joys of knight-errantry with which it was the practice of *Don Quixote* to enlighten his audience whenever he could get one. The knight whose imaginary career the *Don* pleases himself by describing, has passed through a lake of boiling pitch into the Elysian fields, and rides by the side of a bubbling brook towards a castle, wherein, doubtless, the lady of his affections is languishing in the power of some wicked giant or malignant dwarf. The scenery through which the knight is riding is "mystic, wonderful." The flowers in the meadows stand out like sparks of light from the grass. The sun has risen, but has failed, as yet, to disperse the morning mists, and the leaves of the young trees—some in masses, some single and detached—just catch the golden light upon their edges, and sparkle in relief against distant hill-sides lost in mist, and crowned with the towers of some enchanted palace.

To be classed with these two studies is another representing the Great Hunt, got up by the Duke and Duchess, while *Don Quixote* is enjoying their doubtful hospitality. This also is an early morning scene, and the effect, when the drawing is seen from a distance, is extraordinarily true. There is still another of these dawn effects, in which the artist shows *Don Quixote* at the head of a little cavalcade coming towards us on the edge of a hill, with his train of followers. The knight seems to stand erect in his stirrups, his lance is pointed towards the sky, and there is a look of mounting upward about him which gives him so strangely aspiring an aspect, that he seems to be tilting against the very heavens. He and his retinue have ascended already above the clouds in their journey "towards the kingdom of Micomicon," but there

are more exalted heights still above them, in the shape of certain snow-clothed mountain-tops which are altogether detached from earth by the low-lying mists about their bases, and which seem to hang aloft in the clouds, suspended in the firmament as by a miracle.

Examples of more obvious and extreme effects which are got by the juxtaposition of violent lights and shadows, are plentiful in this as in every other collection of drawings by M. Doré. Some are good, though it must be admitted that they are always more common and less delicate than those which have been mentioned. In the illustration which shows Don Quixote holding forth to the goat-herds on the glories of the golden age, one of these violent effects is very well rendered. It is a night-scene, and the wild figures of the goatherds, grouped in a circle round the knight, are lighted, as are the Don and Sancho, by fire-light only. The glare is on the faces of the men, on the more salient points of their costume, and on Don Quixote's armour. It shines upon the trunks of the trees, and on the boughs and leaves which are near enough to catch its rays. The rest of the picture is as black as Erebus. And this is a very true effect; the blackness of landscape and sky at night when contrasted with a small patch of brilliant artificial illumination, being always a remarkable thing. The same contrast is exhibited in another illustration nearer the end of the book, which represents the Procession of the Chariot of Death. Here again the figures, and some portion of the surrounding foliage, are brilliantly lighted up against a distance so dark that no single object can be detected in it.

But perhaps one of the best of these strong effects—so called in contradistinction to the delicate studies of dawn and morning light described above—is the drawing illustrative of Altisidora's Mock Serenade. This is one of the best illustrations in the book. The moonlight is *like* moonlight, pale and spectral. It falls softly on the architectural details of the duke's castle, repeating the outline of each little pinnacle and moulding, vaguely—as shadows do—and glitters sharply on the glass of the window-panes. The building itself seems to be a sort of low pavilion among trees, and on its walls the fantastic shadows of the great boughs and of the massed foliage, are thrown with such true effect that they seem to wave and sway from side to side. The figure of the sprightly Altisidora is in shadow, and is thrown out dark against the door of the pavilion, on which the moonlight falls in a blaze of silver.

Still among the strong effects, there is, in this collection, a most ghastly drawing of the scene between Don Quixote and the duenna when the latter visits the knight in his bed-chamber, and finds him, suspicious that it is the love-sick Altisidora who is approaching, alert and vigilant, standing on his bed, and majestically draped in the voluminous folds of a yellow counterpane. The figure of the knight is preternaturally tall as he stands up in ghostly drapery,

and it is made to appear much taller by means of his shadow, which is thrown upward on the wall above his head. The only light comes from the dim taper carried by the duenna, and one feels that her exclamation of "Bless me!—what is this?" is more than justified.

These effect-studies are good and striking. But by far the larger portion of those drawings in which the production of a strong contrast of light and shadow has been aimed at, strike one as being both common and—if the expression may be allowed—dodgy; the artist producing his results by means which are entirely conventional and common-place, such as the introduction of great masses of a dark monotonous tint, with here and there a few specks of light catching on the edges of the different objects represented in the design, whether figures, or architectural details, or masses of foliage. The mechanical nature of the engraving has been already alluded to, and this, though excusable when the effect produced is new and truthful, is, in other cases where the effect is conventional and common-place, exceedingly wearisome. The truth is, that Gustave Doré is rather too much a man of dodges. He has certain recipes, so to speak, which he uses on particular occasions, and which, but that he is really their original inventor, would make one at times a little impatient. The use of figures in the sky, the clouds being twisted into all sorts of fantastic shapes of men and horses; and the like, is one of these. An allowable thing to do once, but once only. In one of the illustrations to Don Quixote, that which shows the knight watching his armour in the court-yard of the inn, the moon has been made to do comic duty, the shadows on its surface being distorted into the semblance of a human face—an ancient and feeble joke, and altogether unworthy to be used by an artist of Monsieur Doré's pretensions. The idea of turning clouds and trees into shapes resembling human figures, angels, and demons, was a good one originally, but it does not bear repeating.

M. Doré is "nothing if not" startling. When he chooses subjects in which strong effect is not admissible—plain daylight scenes, where caricature has no place, and where there is no opening for what is exaggerated or fantastic—he is seldom successful. In designs of the plainer and less dramatic sort—just those in which our own artists excel—there is always strong evidence of impatience, of deficient study, of neglect of nature. His drawing, too, is defective; he is conventional; and the costumes in which his figures are dressed, are common and theatrical. Such a drawing as that of Dorothea bathing her feet in the stream, is not only bad in every way in which a work of pictorial art *can* be bad, but is un-original. The same may be said of the study of Dorothea struggling in the arms of her lover; of the scene between the knight and the supposed Princess Micomicona; and of a dozen others.

It has been remarked that M. Gustave Doré

shows to most advantage when he has to render some startling effect of nature. But the power of dealing with these is not his sole gift. His work gives evidence at times of a certain feeling for the humorous, all the more precious, in these times, because of its rarity. The power of making one laugh, does not belong to many of our modern illustrators. The strong conviction that he must, above all things, be accurate—that his drawing must be correct, and the lines of his composition agreeable—seems to repress his sense of fun, just as it subdues his capability of dealing with what is dramatic and striking. Perhaps there is a certain incompatibility between the humorous and the accurate. It is certain that in this particular department of wood-engraving some of the most successful humorists have been inaccurate in their drawing, and slight and unfinished. The drawings of Töpfer, of Thackeray, and, often, of Leech, may be given as instances strongly corroborative of this assertion. It is, perhaps, too much to say that a drawing *must* be inaccurate and *must* be slight, if it is to be funny; but it is certain that most of the funniest drawings with which we are acquainted are both slight and inaccurate.

This is particularly the case with Doré. Those who come to the illustrated edition of Don Quixote in search of amusement, must, for the most part, seek among the small and hastily executed woodcuts which appear upon the printed pages, the head-pieces and tail-pieces, rather than among the more ambitious full-page engravings. Some of these minor illustrations are decidedly droll. The little sketch, near the commencement of the book, of Don Quixote in his stable polishing up his armour, the two greyhounds, and Rozinante looking on solemnly, is very quaint; and a tail-piece, showing the knight hermetically sealed up in his helmet, and receiving drink through a reed, exhibits a kind of grave humour which is very Cervantesque. So is the rough drawing of Don Quixote making his first attempt to inoculate Sancho with a taste for knight-errantry. The scene is in the yard of Sancho's house, and the knight has withdrawn his future squire out of Theresa's hearing, in order that he may be beyond the reach of any of those practical suggestions which wives will sometimes put forward when their husbands are going to do something foolish and unprofitable. There is only a back view of Sancho; but it is the back of a man gifted with a most inexhaustible power of swallowing. He is drinking in his master's promises, with an eagerness almost touching. Theresa looks after the pair suspiciously. There is a fair allowance in this volume of such sketches. The drawing of Don Quixote and Rozinante, after the two have been specially maltreated, making ineffectual efforts to get up from the ground; and that of the knight left alone in the Sierra Morena, with the rabbits coming out of their holes to stare at him, and not a bit afraid; may be taken as

specimens. Sometimes, a good idea is conveyed with half a dozen strokes of the pencil. Sancho's regret at leaving the good cheer which he had enjoyed on the occasion of Camacho's wedding, is told thus, in the roughest way; but effectually. The artist has planted Sancho on the back of Dapple, riding away from this scene of good living and comfort; but with his face to the ass's tail. The notion of Sancho's regret is conveyed unmistakably. Don Quixote in a towering rage with Sancho, for daring to laugh at the fulling-mills adventure, the knight restraining his own laughter with the utmost difficulty, or the tail-piece to the chapter which describes the abdication of Sancho, and in which the ex-governor of Barataria is bonneted with his own crown. Sketches such as these show with how very little labour a man may give to the public the benefit of an idea, if only he have got one. There is, by-the-by, another of these tail-pieces which should be specially dear to all those who say, with Sancho, "A blessing on the man who invented that self-same thing called sleep; it covers a man all over like a cloak." This is a sketch which shows Sancho, Rozinante, and the ass, all stretched on the ground together, fast asleep; Sancho being propped in a most comfortable manner with his head against Rozinante's body, and his legs over Dapple's back.

The artist enters with much zest into his author's humour as displayed in the annals of Rozinante and Dapple. The close friendship between the horse and the ass is insisted on very strongly by M. Doré, and he seems never weary of dwelling upon the cordiality of their alliance. When master and man make their night bivouac, or enjoy their afternoon repose under the cork-trees, or in the fresh water-meadows which Cervantes loves to describe, Rozinante and Dapple are never far off. Whether reposing side by side, or rolling ecstatically on the grass, they are always close together. They are powerfully interested, too, in each other's adventures. When Sancho fetters Rozinante, to prevent his master from attacking the fulling-mills, the ass looks on with intense feeling depicted in his very expressive ears; and when Dapple is stolen and Rozinante wakes to a consciousness that his companion is no longer near him, his dismay is almost as great as that of Sancho Panza himself. The attachment of the two quadrupeds to their respective masters, too, is shown in more than one of these sketches; in the drawing, for instance, which illustrates the embarkation of Don Quixote and Sancho in the enchanted boat. The horse and the jackass are left behind, and are shown tugging at their halters in their desire to follow their owners. The affection of Dapple for his master is dwelt upon continually by M. Doré. When Sancho is caught among the boughs of a tree, and suspended to one of them by the waistband of his breeches, Dapple, though unable to assist his unfortunate master, does not desert him, but stands beneath the tree sniffing sympathetically at his pendent proprietor; similarly, when Sancho is tossed in the

blanket, the donkey brays to Don Quixote, as the latter looks over the wall, imploring him to interfere.

It is in rough humorous sketches such as these, and in studies of effect, that Gustave Doré shows to the greatest advantage. When he aims at the beautiful, the symmetrical, or the complete, he for the most part breaks down; just where our own men are most successful. He has his merits and defects, and they have theirs. To sum them up on both sides, it may be said that Gustave Doré gives us pictures about something, imperfectly executed: while our own book-artists of the new school give us well-executed pictures about nothing.

MRS. M.

THE following is a pendent to the paper which recently appeared in this journal, headed "Is it possible?"* It is a simple narrative taken down in short-hand from the lips of the narrator. He is a man now getting on in years, who, distrustful of all other people's experience verging on what we impertinently term the supernatural, scarcely even ventures to believe his own. As a statement at first hand of an appearance testified to by the narrator and corroborated by his wife, both living, it has seemed to me, while simply transcribing the notes, to possess an interest often wanting in more artistic stories of artificial manufacture.

My wife's sister, Mrs. M., was left a widow at the age of thirty-five, with two children, girls, of whom she was passionately fond. She carried on the draper's business at Bognor, established by her husband. Being still a very handsome woman, there were several suitors for her hand. The only favoured one among them was a Mr. Barton. My wife never liked this Mr. Barton, and made no secret of her feelings to her sister, whom she frequently told that Barton only wanted to be master of the little haberdashery shop in Bognor. He was a man in poor circumstances, and had no other motive in his proposal of marriage, so my wife thought, than to better himself.

On the 23rd of August, 1831, Mrs. M. arranged to go with Barton to a pic-nic party at Goodwood Park, the seat of the Duke of Richmond, who had kindly thrown open his grounds to the public for the day. My wife, a little annoyed at her going out with this man, told her she had much better remain at home to look after her children and attend to the business. Mrs. M., however, bent on going, made arrangements about leaving the shop, and got my wife to promise to see to her little girls while she was away.

The party set out in a four-wheel phaeton with a pair of ponies driven by Mrs. M., and a gig, or which I lent my horse.

Now we did not expect them to come back

till nine or ten o'clock, at any rate. I mention this particularly to show that there could be no expectation of their earlier return in the mind of my wife, to account for what follows.

At six o'clock that bright summer's evening my wife went out into the garden to call the children. Not finding them, she went all round the place in her search till she came to the empty stable; thinking they might have run in there to play, she pushed open the door; there, standing in the darkest corner, she saw Mrs. M. My wife was surprised to see her, certainly, for she did not expect her return so soon; but, oddly enough, it did not strike her as being singular to see her *there*. Vexed as she had felt with her all day for going, and rather glad, in her woman's way, to have something entirely different from the genuine *casus belli* to hang a retort upon, my wife said, "Well, Harriet, I should have thought another dress would have done quite as well for your pic-nic as that best black silk you have on." My wife was the elder of the twain, and had always assumed a little of the air of counsellor to her sister. Black silks were thought a great deal more of at that time than they are just now, and silk of any kind was held particularly inconsistent wear for Wesleyan Methodists, to which denomination we belonged.

Receiving no answer, my wife said, "Oh! well, Harriet, if you can't take a word of reproof without being sulky, I'll leave you to yourself," and then came into the house to tell me the party had returned, and that she had seen her sister in the stable, not in the best of tempers. At the moment it did not seem extraordinary to me that my wife should have met her sister in the stable.

I waited in-doors some time, expecting them to return my horse. Mrs. M. was my neighbour, and, living so close, and being always on most friendly terms, I wondered that none of the party had come in to tell us about the day's pleasure. I thought I would just run in and see how they had got on. To my great surprise, the servant told me they had not returned. I began then to feel anxiety about the result. My wife, however, having seen Harriet in the stable, refused to believe the servant's assertion, and said there was no doubt of their return, but that they had probably left word to say they were not come back, in order to offer a plausible excuse for taking a further drive, and detaining my horse for another hour or so.

At eleven o'clock Mr. Pinnock, my brother-in-law, who had been one of the party, came in, apparently much agitated. As soon as she saw him, and before he had time to speak, my wife seemed to know what he had to say.

"What is the matter?" she said. "Something has happened to Harriet, I know!"

"Yes," replied Mr. Pinnock. "If you wish to see her alive, you must come with me directly to Goodwood."

From what he said, it appeared that one of the ponies had never been properly broken in; that the man from whom the turn-out was

* See page 614 of vol. xvii.

hired for the day had cautioned Mrs. M. respecting it before they started; and that he had lent it reluctantly, being the only pony to match he had in the stable at the time, and would not have lent it at all had he not known Mrs. M. to be a remarkably good whip. On reaching Goodwood, it seems, the gentlemen of the party had got out, leaving the ladies to take a drive round the park in the phaeton. One or both of the ponies must then have taken fright at something in the road, for Mrs. M. had scarcely taken the reins when the ponies shied. Had there been plenty of room she would readily have mastered the difficulty, but it was in a narrow road where a gate obstructed the way. Some men rushed to open the gate; too late. The three other ladies jumped out at the beginning of the accident, but Mrs. M. still held on to the reins, seeking to control her ponies, until, finding it was impossible for the men to get the gate open in time, she, too, sprang forward; at the same instant the ponies came smash on to the gate. She had made her spring too late, and fell heavily to the ground on her head. The heavy, old-fashioned comb of the period, with which her hair was looped up, was driven into her skull by the force of the fall. The Duke of Richmond, a witness to the accident, ran to her assistance, lifted her up, and rested her head upon his knees. The only words Mrs. M. had spoken were uttered at that time—"Good God, my children!" By direction of the duke, she was immediately conveyed to a neighbouring inn, where every assistance, medical and otherwise, that forethought or kindness could suggest was afforded her.

At six o'clock in the evening, the time at which my wife had gone into the stable and seen what we both now knew had been her spirit, Mrs. M., in her sole interval of returning consciousness, had made a violent but unsuccessful attempt to speak. From her glance having wandered round the room, in solemn, awful wistfulness, it had been conjectured she wished to see some relative or friend not then present.

I went to Goodwood in the gig with Mr. Pincock, and arrived in time to see my sister-in-law die at two o'clock in the morning. Her only conscious moments had been those in which she laboured unsuccessfully to speak, which had occurred at six o'clock. She wore a black silk dress.

When we came to dispose of her business, and to wind up her affairs, there was scarcely anything left for the two orphan girls. Mrs. M.'s father, however, being well to do, took them to bring them up. At his death, which happened soon afterwards, his property went to his eldest son, who speedily dissipated the inheritance. During a space of two years the children were taken as visitors by various relations in turn, and lived an unhappy life with no settled home.

For some time I had been debating with myself how to help these children, having many boys and girls of my own to provide for. I had

almost settled to take them myself, bad as trade was with me at the time, and bring them up with my own family, when one day business called me to Brighton. The business was so urgent that it necessitated my travelling at night.

I set out from Bognor in a close-headed gig on a beautiful moonlight winter's night, when the crisp frozen snow lay deep over the earth, and its fine glistening dust was whirled about in little eddies on the bleak night-wind—driven now and then in stinging powder against my tingling cheek, warm and glowing in the sharp air. I had taken my great dog "Bose" (short for "Boatswain") for company. He lay, blinking wakefully, sprawled out on the spare seat of the gig beneath a mass of warm rugs.

Between Little Hampton and Worthing is a lonely piece of road, long and dreary, through bleak and bare open country, where the snow lay knee-deep, sparkling in the moonlight. It was so cheerless that I turned round to speak to my dog, more for the sake of hearing the sound of a voice than anything else. "Good Bose," I said, patting him; "there's a good dog!" Then suddenly I noticed he shivered, and slunk underneath the wraps. Then the horse required my attention, for he gave a start and was going wrong, and had nearly taken me into the ditch.

Then I looked up. Walking at my horse's head, dressed in a sweeping robe, so white that it shone dazzling against the white snow, I saw a lady, her back turned to me, her head bare; her hair dishevelled and strayed, showing sharp and black against her white dress.

I was at first so much surprised at seeing a lady, so dressed, exposed to the open night, and such a night as this, that I scarcely knew what to do. Recovering myself, I called out to know if I could render assistance—if she wished to ride? No answer. I drove faster, the horse blinking, and shying, and trembling the while, his ears laid back in abject terror. Still the figure maintained its position close to my horse's head. Then I thought that what I saw was no woman, but perchance a man disguised for the purpose of robbing me, seeking an opportunity to seize the bridle and stop the horse. Filled with this idea, I said, "Good Bose! hi! look at it, boy!" but the dog only shivered, as if in fright. Then we came to a place where four cross-roads met.

Determined to know the worst, I pulled up the horse. I fetched Bose, unwilling, out by the ears. He was a good dog at anything from a rat to a man, but he slunk away that night into the hedge, and lay there, his head between his paws, whining and howling. I walked straight up to the figure, still standing by the horse's head. As I walked, the figure turned, and I saw *Harriet's face* as plainly as I see you now—white and calm—placid, as idealised ^{as} beautified by death. I must own that, though not a nervous man, in that instant I felt ^{ack} and faint. Harriet looked me full in the face with a long, eager, silent look. I knew then it

was her spirit, and felt a strange calm come over me, for I knew it was nothing to harm me. When I could speak, I asked what troubled her. She looked at me still—never changing that cold fixed stare. Then I felt in my mind it was her children, and I said:

"Harriet? Is it for your children you are troubled?"

No answer.

"Harriet," I continued, "if for these you are troubled, be assured they shall never want while I have power to help them. Rest in peace!"

Still no answer.

I put up my hand to wipe from my forehead the cold perspiration which had gathered there. When I took my hand away from shading my eyes, the figure was gone. I was alone on the bleak snow-covered ground. The breeze, that had been hushed before, breathed coolly and gratefully on my face, and the cold stars glimmered and sparkled sharply in the far blue heavens. My dog crept up to me and furtively licked my hand, as who should say, "Good master, don't be angry, I have served you in all but this."

I took the children and brought them up till they could help themselves.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

THE MASSACRE OF THE MAMELUKES.

MOHAMMED ALI, born in Roumelia in 1769, and raised to the pashalick of Egypt in 1805, having in 1811 driven the Mamelukes, who were in rebellion against him, into Nubia, far beyond the first cataract, prevailed on five thousand of the more peaceable of those warlike horsemen to come to Cairo and settle there under his protection. On the Koran, and by the sacred heads of the two martyr brothers, Hassan and Hooseyn, the favourite saints of the ancient city, the great pasha had sworn to maintain Saim Bey and his chiefs in all the posts of honour or emolument of which they were possessed. The Mamelukes had wasted their strength and thinned their numbers by the fiery charges which they had hurled against the dogged bayonets of Mohammed Ali's Turks and Albanians, from the Pyramids of Dagshoor to the shores of Nile that look on Philæ, and began at last to weary of open conflict.

Wily Mohammed's professed intention was to unite all these turbulent men under the green standard of the Prophet, and march against the Wahabees, a reforming sect of Arabs that, ever since 1750, had been the plague and vexation of Egypt. For two years they had stopped the pilgrim caravan from Damascus, and had deprived the pashalick of all the honour and benefit derivable from the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. The new pasha, impatient of their insolence, vowed their destruction, although he had hitherto been compelled to temporise with them. The Egyptians generally were eager for the war, the Arnaut soldiers clamorous, the Turks angrily anxious, Cairo impatient in any

way to get rid of both Turks and Arnauts, whose quarrels and scuffles were the torment of the quieter citizens, the horror of the traders in the bazaars, the detestation of the cook-shop keepers. The dim shaded streets of the city now echoed with the Albanian drum, the old mosques resounded with the clash of the war-cymbals. The great square of the Uzbeekeyh was crowded with troops; droves of camels were picketed in the plain below the cliff of the citadel and in the desert towards Suez. The half-naked dervishes shook their bamboo staffs, and howled their exhortations in all parts of the city to all true Moslems to march to the redemption of Mecca.

The leader of the expedition was not to be Ibrahim, the stepson of Mohammed Ali, who had just driven the Mamelukes into Nubia, but the pasha's favourite son, Tossoon Pasha, a chivalrous, clever lad, only seventeen, who was the idol of the wild soldiery. Tossoon, scarcely yet strong enough to bear a coat of mail under a desert sun, had been made governor of the citadel in 1805, a pasha of two tails in 1809, and, latterly, general-in-chief of the Mecca expedition. Finati, an Italian, who served in the Wahabee campaign, and has left an account of it on record, gives a glowing report of the young pasha, as kind, generous, affable, merciful, and humane. While the bayonets are mustering at Heliopolis, and the camels, clustered with Albanians, are plodding from all parts of the country towards the city of white tents, newly sprung up under the palm-groves round Cairo, we must peruse a back-page or two of Mohammed Ali's history, without which the relationships of this large-minded and subtle man cannot be clearly understood.

The man who with a strong hand had wrested the Nile and its borders from the hands of the beys, was a native of Cavalea, a small town of Roumelia, a district of Albania, the Epirus of the Greeks, and the birth-place of Pyrrhus. Losing his father in early life, he was adopted by the governor of Cavalea, who protected him, and trained him to arms. His sagacity, vigilance, and daring soon led to his being appointed, in a subordinate way, as a collector of taxes—no sinecure in a mountainous country, covered with woods of cedar, oak, and chesnut, good for ambuscades, and where every peasant is a hunter, a warrior, and a hater of taxes. The young soldier had no scruples. He had to collect the taxes, and he did it quietly if he could; if not, roughly.

As it is not uncommon among the Turks to unite the duties of a soldier with the pursuits of a merchant, Mohammed became a dealer in tobacco—a business which he appears to have followed with considerable success, till the invasion of Egypt by the French called him to fulfil a higher destiny. The contingent of three hundred men raised by the township of Cavalea was placed under his command. Ali was now decorated with the higher title of Bin-Bashi, and recognised as a captain of regular troops.

His conduct under the standard soon attracted the attention of Kussouf, the governor of Cairo, who appointed the young Epirote to the command of a division of the army, under Youssof Bey. The pay of the Albanian troops was in arrears, which caused their disaffection, and Mohammed refused obedience to the governor unless this wrong was redressed. The governor sent orders that he should appear before him that night; but Ali, not unacquainted with the object and usual termination of such private interviews, returned for answer that he would show himself only in broad daylight, and in the midst of his soldiers. Perceiving the danger with which he was threatened, Kussouf then admitted into Cairo the Albanian guards under Taher Pasha, hoping that the intrigues of the one chief would counteract those of the other. But in this expectation he was grievously disappointed; for the mountaineers, in whatever points they might differ, now became unanimous in the one point of demanding their pay, and in all the measures which were suggested for compelling Kussouf to advance it. They attacked the palace, reduced the citadel, drove Kussouf and his household from the city, and finally the vice-regal power was deposited in the hands of the Pasha Taher.

The tyrannical measures of this new ruler, however, brought his reign to a close at the end of twenty-two days, and the actual government of the country reverted to the hands of the Mamelukes, under the aged Ibrahim, Osmann, Bardissy, and Mohammed Ali. The Porte, indeed, sent a pasha of high rank to assume the direction of affairs at Cairo; but the beys having once more the upper hand, seized the viceroy soon after landing, and put him to death. The undisputed ascendancy of the Mamelukes might, in the end, have proved fatal to Mohammed Ali; who did not belong to that body. For this reason he contrived to embroil Bardissy, who has been called the Hotspur of the beys, with some of his associates, and finally, attacking him with his own hand, drove him from the capital, and reinstated the exiled pasha, whom he intended to use merely as a tool for his own purposes. The Grand Signior, suspecting his ambitious views, issued orders, in the year 1804, that the Albanians should retire into their own country, intending, it may be presumed, to garrison the Egyptian fortresses with troops less disposed to insubordination. Mohammed, however, was proclaimed basha by the shouting soldiers. The Porte was weak in Egypt; the Mamelukes had the power of the old prætorian guards—they could raise, and they could depose. It was “a far cry” to Constantinople. A strong hand had seized the sceptre at last, and turned it into a battle-mace to brain his opponents. Goldsmith once said that Burke winded into an argument like a serpent: like that subtle reptile, Mohammed had twisted towards the throne, alternately crouching and threatening. It was his at last—all that fair land: the vast river reaching from

far in Africa to the Mediterranean: its rocks, its deserts, its towns, its broad green acres of millet and sugar-cane, its pyramids and temples.

Kourschid Pasha was endeavouring to rouse the Mamelukes against his rival, when the capitan pasha suddenly arrived at Alexandria, and sent Kourschid orders to instantly give up the citadel to Mohammed and return himself to head-quarters. The Mamelukes were, however, determined to strike another blow at the Albanian. The new pasha wished nothing better. He turned the city into one vast pitfall, and lay crouching behind the rock-walls of the citadel. Every flat roof, every fountain-court, was an ambuscade. Mohammed suggested to the sheiks, on whom he had the greatest reliance, to encourage the beys in their meditated assault, and even to promise them assistance should they resolve to enter the city. The Mamelukes, reposing implicit faith in their pretended friends, seized the first opportunity of bursting in at one of the gates which had been opened for the purpose of admitting some countrymen with their camels. Dividing their number into two parties, they advanced along the streets sounding their martial instruments, and anticipating a complete triumph. But they soon discovered their mistake; for, being attacked by the inhabitants on all sides, driven from post to post, and slaughtered without mercy, they sustained so severe a loss as from that moment to cease to be formidable. At the mosque gates, at the fountain foot, in the bazaars, in the squares, everywhere the Mamelukes were struck down, shot, or had the life cut or beaten out of them. All the prisoners were massacred, and eighty-three shaven heads sent to festoon the gory walls of the imperial seraglio on the shores of the Bosphorus.

The Turks now began again their usual mean and cowardly policy. They had used Mohammed against the Mamelukes, now they would support the beys against Mohammed. They sent a capitan pasha to Alexandria with instructions to assist Elfy, well known by his residence in England, in his endeavours to assume the vice-regal mantle, and thereby to depress the rising power of Mohammed. This envoy, upon his arrival, sent a capidji bashi to Cairo, summoning Ali to appear immediately at that port, where his master was ready to bestow upon him the government of Salonica.

The old bird was not caught with chaff. He was not to be lured by the shaking of a coloured ribbon. Mohammed knew that behind the firman for the pashalik of Salonica a bowstring was twisted. He told his friends he should be a fool and coward indeed, after winning the pasha's turban with only five hundred men, to surrender now, when he had fifteen hundred resolute men by his side.

“Cairo is to be publicly sold!” he exclaimed. “Whoever will give most blows of the sabre will win it and remain its master.”

His demeanour towards the pasha was, at the same time, submissive and dutiful; he artfully regretted that the mutinous state of the army

would not permit him to obey the summons of his highness, and to have the ineffable pleasure of showing how ready he was on all occasions to bow the knee (slave that he was) before a representative of his imperial lord. At this very moment he was plotting with the beys, and sending large sums of money to Constantinople, to secure friends on both sides of the Mediterranean. At length the sultan, finding that Ali could not be deposed, and perceiving himself on the eve of a war with Russia, forwarded secret orders to the capitán to make the best terms he could with the usurper, and to leave him in possession of the viceroyalty. A short time after this occurrence the regular diploma confirming him in his office was transmitted by the Porte.

Mohammed accepted with profound gratitude the power so generously confided to him. He did not care to see that the Porte had only given what they could not refuse. The two great enemies of the new viceroy—Elfy Bey and Bardissy—conveniently dying about this time, Mohammed became at last the master of Egypt. Thinking nought done “while aught remained to do,” he was about to march into Upper Egypt and annihilate the residue of the Mamelukes, when news reached him that war had broken out between Great Britain and the Ottoman empire.

The Mamelukes, too, have a history worth repeating. They almost exactly resembled the sultan's Janissaries, three thousand of whom were killed in 1826, during the revolt at Constantinople, which ended in their suppression. The latter were also released slaves or prisoners of war from Albania and the Danubian provinces, Circassia and Georgia. The sheik's horse-tail standard was to the Mamelukes what the sacred regimental soup-kettle was to the Janissaries. Both were held together by the freemasonry of regimental tradition and the common desire of oppression and plunder. Both grew in power till they became dangerous to the sultan. Egypt, after the Arab caliphs passed away, fell into the power of the Turks, and under their rule the Mamelukes first became known. By degrees their fourteen beys ruled the fourteen provinces of Egypt, the military republic being presided over in divan by a shaiikh-el-belled, or chief of the country. Sultan Selim subdued them for a time, but the beys soon regained their power, and turned the viceroys into mere puppets of their own.

For years Egypt was torn asunder by the factions of these ambitious chieftains, alternately victorious, deposed, and slain. No village was safe from these marauders. The peasants, finding industry wasted, no opportunity left for honest gain, and no security for property, became robbers and murderers, idle, hopeless, lying, and dissolute. Wherever these savage horsemen fought, wherever their sabres flashed or their horses were spurred, the poor man's plot of millet was sure to be first trampled down and burned. Greedy as crocodiles and rapacious as vultures, these men were the last and

worst of the plagues of Egypt. Now comes the gist of the old story we are now telling.

At the end of February, 1811, Mohammed Ali invited Saim Bey, the chief of the Mamelukes, then in Cairo, to an audience to discuss the approaching campaign against the Wahabees. The pasha wished to have his new friends under his standard, and to share with them the honour and plunder of the holy war. He was frank and familiar with the bey, told him his own views, and invited him to disclose his. Saim was a man of craft and penetration, but he yielded to this frankness and laid open his heart. He discussed the transport of troops past the dangerous coasts of the Red Sea, planned how to seize the defile of Jedeed Bogaz, and arranged how to drive the Wahabees from their hill-breastworks at Cara Lembi. The bey was flattered; his pride thawed; he forgot his hatred for the usurper, the slayer of his comrades and his kinsmen. He began to boast of the number of saddles he could fill, of the sabres at his disposal, of the bim-bashis under his influence. He spoke in a high and confident tone, with an inflation not unnoticed by those keen stealthy eyes sometimes, but seldom, turned full upon him. He spoke of the union and attachment of his Aranouts and Circassian horsemen with an unction and evident belief not unnoticed and not forgotten by Mohammed. The interview concluded by Mohammed, with many courteous nods of his turban of green banded with gold tissue, inviting the Mameluke chief and all his adherents capable of bearing arms to the citadel on the following Friday, to make final arrangements for the part the Mamelukes were to take in the ensuing campaign against the Arab schismatics. On his return from this gracious audience, Saim communicated the news to his chieftains, and showed with what art he had concealed their plots, and how completely the crafty Albanian usurper had fallen into their snare.

One old greybeard alone was festless and dissatisfied. Old men, it was thought, often mistake their present suspicions for their past wisdom. He cried out at once:

“We are betrayed!”

But the rest laughed at him. Saim bent his brows, and said:

“So much the worse if it be so; if there be danger, we shall not want courage to meet it.”

Saim then called together his captains, lieutenants, sergeants, and standard-bearers, and ordered them to accompany him to the lion's den, up on the citadel, in the forenoon of the next Friday.

In the mean time, all Cairo was like a hive at swarming-time. The seller of limes staved his quaint cry of “God make them easy to sell!” to chat to the erier of “Odours of Paradise flowers of the Henna.” The man with the black swollen goat's-skin of water on his back discoursed on all the unwonted bustle with the seller of sherbet; the itinerant pipe-cleaner with the dancing dervish; the red-eyed lupin-vendor with the blind beggar at the

fountain corner; the old men who watch the slippers at the doors of the mosque with the camel-drivers from Samanoud; the sycamore-fig man wrangled over it with the donkey-boys; the date-merchant, cross-legged on the open counter of his store, argued it with the opium and perfume-seller opposite, who had just risen from his evening prayer; even the caller to prayer, just descended, at sunset, from his balcony high up in the minaret, stopped the rose-seller who was passing in the midst of his cry, "The rose was a thorn—from the sweat of the Prophet it blossomed," to talk over the news of the great Friday's levee in the citadel.

Everywhere, from Shoobra to Boolak, from the fresh green fields under the shadow of the pyramids to the great sacred sycamore-tree at Heliopolis, the talk was about the Mamelukes and the Wahabees. Even the naked shadoof-workers lifting the yellow Nile water in their creaking wheels strung with red pitchers were talking politics, and praising either Mohammed or Saim Bey. There was, indeed, no dim, damp, narrow, winding defile of a lane where people were not thinking or talking of the Friday; no latticed window with a water-jug to cool in it where women of the harem were not prattling about the march of the Mamelukes.

Before dawn on the eventful Friday the drums were rolling and beating all through the city, in the green Uzbeekeyh, and on through the bazaars, summoning the pasha's troops to a grand parade. The notice was sudden, and there was a rumour among the soldiers that Tossoon Pasha was that day to be invested with the pelisse of commander-in-chief. There was therefore a great seizing of muskets and cartouch-boxes, a great belting on of swords, and adjustment of scarfs and sashes. The companies hurried from their quarters to form in the squares and open places, and were instantly marched off to the citadel and placed with extreme care in their respective stations. The bim-bashis went down the ranks, and strictly charged each man not to quit his post, on any pretext, not even for a moment. Their muskets were examined, and then carefully loaded.

The Mameluke procession of four hundred and seventy horsemen soon came winding across the millet-fields and lupin-grounds between the pyramids and the Nile—along the raised earthen causeways between the corn-fields and the clover-fields. Their banners of yellow and crimson fluttered brightly in the morning air. The sun shone on the gold tissue that banded their turbans, on their striped white silk robes, on the golden flowers that studded their uniforms and half covered their close-linked coats of mail. The sunbeams of March, in Egypt clear and burning, glittered on the embossed gold and silver of their pistol-butts, the handles of their handgears, the hilts of their Damascus yataghans. Their saddle-clothes were stiff with lace; their cartouch-boxes and huge stirrups—even the bindings of their high saddles—were gilt. A tulip-bed in a breeze, a summer wind ruffling half a mile of poppies, present not

a more gorgeous sight. Young striplings, beautiful as women, were there, proud of youth and courage as yet untried, reining in their white Arab stallions side by side with brown, scarred, bearded veterans who had dashed their horses on the bayonets of Napoleon's old fire-eating grenadiers, and who rode grimly on, careless whether it was a levee or a battle, so they got their chibouk and opium at night, and their crust and kibab at the regular hour. So they rode on after the drums and banners, those four hundred and seventy light-hearted, reckless horsemen. A thunder-cloud hung over their heads. On the face of one of them only unheeded fell a slant sunbeam, and that sunbeam was an unheeded omen.

With a fanfare of trumpets and a roll of kettle-drums the Mamelukes' officers entered the ancient city, and wound through its devious defiles, under the high awnings, past the fountains of the mosques, up, up towards the citadel. They were led by three of their generals, among whom Saim Bey was specially conspicuous. At the gate they were received by the Turkish and Nubian infantry with military honours. They passed the gate, passed on to the palace on the higher ground, between the fortress walls studded with cannon. The citadel dates back to the days of Saladin, even to those of Amrou. There was a fortress there in the times of the Pharaohs. It is, like other fortresses, a series of covered ways between bastion and bastion, alternating with open parade-grounds. The four hundred and seventy men threw themselves from their horses at the steps that led up to Joseph's granite-columned hall, shook the dust from their glittering robes, adjusted their swords, pistols, and poniards with warlike confidence, and entered.

The three chiefs were instantly summoned into the Hall of Audience, where Mohammed Ali sat with his favourite Albanian adviser, Hassan Pasha, "a close contriver of all harms." The pasha was, as usual, bland, grave, open-hearted, clear-eyed, and serene of countenance. He seemed even to dwell upon his guest's words with an anxious curiosity at once unusual and flattering. They talked of the Wahabees and the blows that should be struck at them. Many compliments and civilities passed.

Presently the pasha, growing graver, clapped his hands, and Nubians entered with smoking coffee-pots, gold trays, and little cups set in gilt frames in the Turkish manner. Still they chatted. Then more slaves in flowing white entered with the long cherry stems and the broad red clay bowls filled with that golden-threaded tobacco of which the pasha himself was so good a judge; for had he not once to buy and sell it? They bring red-hot charcoal in silver censers, and throwing themselves at the feet of the Mameluke chiefs, swing round the pipe-stems and present the amber mouthpieces to the honoured guests. Just then, however, the pasha rose from his divan, stroked his perfumed beard with his white jewelled hand, thrust his feet into his red slippers, and withdrew, as if to

leave his guests for the present more at their ease.

But his face blackened as he entered the near ante-chamber, where the armed captain of the guard eagerly waited his orders. The pasha's hands were feverishly clutching his sword-handle, his eyes dilating, his mustachios alive to the very tips, like a tiger's tail before it springs. These false Mamelukes, he said, have been plotting to seize the citadel, and overturn his power, the moment the army leaves the city. It had even been proposed in the Mameluke camp to seize the pasha himself on his way to Suez. Name of the Prophet! was this to be endured longer. On their heads be it. There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet. The captain of the guard was instantly to close and bar the gates of the citadel. The moment Saim Pasha and the two generals took horse, the troops were to fire on them and upon every Mameluke within reach. The soldiers in the town were to destroy all fugitives, while the Albanians on the plain below the citadel exterminated the residue. The fiery cross was also to be at once sent round to all the provincial governors, so that not one Mameluke should be left.

The three Mameluke chiefs waiting and waiting, finding the pasha did not return, and being, moreover, informed that he had retired to his harem (which was an end to all further questions, that being inviolate), began either to be distrustful or else to think it due etiquette to leave. Scarcely had they thrown themselves into their saddles than a rain of fire broke upon them from behind the ramparts. The bullets tore through their ranks from every side; all was confusion, dismay, and horror. Tossing up their arms and firing vainly at the walls, they were mowed down by hundreds. In vain the maddened men spurred up every passage only to find fresh death bursting on them. Saim Pasha, some said, was taken and led before the pasha, who upbraided him with his treachery, and with the murder of his adopted father, Elfi Bey. He was then haled out, and his head struck off. Finati, however, who was present, says that Saim gained his saddle and dashed down, sword in hand, to the outer gate of the citadel. It was closed inexorably, like the rest, and he fell before it pierced with innumerable bullets. Some of the Mamelukes, indeed, succeeded in taking refuge in the pasha's harem, and in the house of Toussoon; but they were all dragged forth, conducted before the Kiaya Bey, and beheaded on the spot. The lifeless body of the brave Saim was exposed to every infamy. A rope was passed round the neck, and the bloody carcass dragged through the various parts of the city. Mengin, who was in Cairo at the time, assures his readers that the streets, during two whole days, bore the appearance of a place taken by assault. Every kind and degree of violence was committed under pretence of searching for the devoted Mamelukes; and it was not until five hundred houses had been sacked, much valuable property destroyed, and many lives lost, that Ali and his

son rode out of the citadel to repress the popular fury. Mohammed noted among the slain four hundred and seventy mounted Mamelukes, besides their attendants, who usually served on foot. The number of victims in the end did not fall short of a thousand. The heads of the principal officers were embalmed and sent as an acceptable present to the sultan. Many victims, whose equestrian skill was now of no avail, and who were crowded together and encumbered with their dress of ceremony, avoided present death by surrendering themselves. The wicket of the citadel gate was then opened, and they were dragged out one by one to the court of the citadel, where they were first stripped and then beheaded, receiving their fate, it is said, with undaunted resolution, and only indignant that they were deprived of the opportunity of exercising their valour against their executioners. Pent in like sheep in a slaughter-house, these brave men were struck dead one after the other. A few boys alone were saved, because they were young and beautiful.

One Mameluke chief alone escaped, and he only by some providence so near a miracle that it will never be forgotten as long as the Nile flows through Egypt. This chief, Amim Bey, a brother of the assassinated Elfy, had arrived late for the procession. Saim had already passed through the citadel gate; he therefore took a lower place in the ranks, and probably was to have taken the same place on the return. Hearing the gates shut suddenly, and seeing the firing begin, he instantly knew the treachery that was at work, and spurred his horse up a narrow turn to a lofty terrace close to where the great mosque of Mohammed Ali now stands, and a little to the north of the Roomáylee Gate. The fire might be slacker there, or Amim might have ridden into a corner, he knew not where. There was a gap in the old wall: all the repairs having been given to the bastions and curtains facing the town. The precipice ran forty feet down to the sandy plain below. On one side rose the minarets of Cairo and the domes of countless mosques, in the distance spread the valley of the Nile and the cones of the great pyramids. One last look, then Amim spurred his noble horse madly at the gap, and sprang out into the air as from a four-pair of stairs' window. It was like leaping from a shot-tower or from a cloud. There is a Providence for the brave. Some geni or peris wafted him through the air. He floated down as if on the enchanted wooden horse of the Arabian story. In plain words, the long drift of rubbish from the ruined wall broke his fall. He lifted himself, half stunned, from his poor dead horse, and found himself whole and sound under the precipice from which he had leaped. An Arab (some say Albanian officers) had, luckily for him, pitched his black tent and picketed his horses close to where he fell. Instantly Amim entered and threw himself on the rites of Arab hospitality. It was granted. The Arab protected

him, and kept him concealed till the soldiers had wreaked their fury. When rumours of Amin's escape reached Mohammed, the Arab generously gave the fugitive a horse and sped him to Syria. Finati afterwards saw him at the palace of Suleyman Pasha at Acre.

The search for the Mamelukes was very hot and greedy in Cairo, a Mameluke's head being now worth considerably more than a melon. The whole city was full of lamentations. The carnage and disorder was taken advantage of by malice and plunder. Many innocent persons were killed by mistake or in the hurry of the slaughter. A few of the Mamelukes still lay concealed or barricaded in their own houses, or in the houses of the braver and more faithful of their friends and dependents. In some instances, where a desperate resistance was feared, their houses were burnt down with all the inmates and treasures. Five hundred houses were either sacked or destroyed. In many cases the soldiers risked their lives in regular siege rather than lose their plunder. The rapine lasted six days.

The order given at the same time for the slaughter of all the remaining Mamelukes in Egypt, within the course of a month, brought in seven or eight hundred more heads from the towns and villages up the Nile. These heads were daily exposed at Cairo, before the gates of the citadel. It was a more arduous task to effect the destruction of those Mamelukes who, to the number of eight or nine hundred sabres, besides negroes and Arabs, were still encamped in Upper Egypt under the command of Ibrahim Bey. A large body of troops was sent against them, who are said to have eventually surprised and slaughtered them.

So little compunction did the pasha feel when reflecting on the occurrence, that, on being informed that he was reproached by all French travellers in their narratives for this inhuman massacre, he replied that he would have a picture of it painted, together with one of the murder of the Duc d'Enghien, and leave to posterity what judgment it might pass on the two events.

It is probable that Mohammed slew only that he should not be slain. The following is the version of the story given by his friends: Jussouf, Pasha of Damascus, having been unsuccessful in his attempts to repel the attacks of that formidable sect of Arabs, the Wahabees, a commission was given to Suliman, Pasha of Acre, to send his head to Constantinople; but Jussouf escaped his fate by a timely flight to Egypt, where he was hospitably received and protected by Mohammed Ali. Suliman afterwards, succeeding no better against the Wahabees, fell into disgrace with the Porte, which ordered the Viceroy of Egypt to undertake the recovery of Mecca and Medina from those sectaries, and promised him the governments of Damascus and Acre as a reward. The Pasha of Acre was, on these accounts, extremely indignant with Mohammed Ali, and eagerly listened to a proposal made to him by

the Mamelukes, of joining forces and falling upon the viceroy after his army should be diminished by the departure of the troops destined for Arabia. This treachery was, however, discovered to Mohammed Ali by a person in the confidence of Saim Bey, who had been bribed to disclose his master's secrets; and Mohammed resolutely resolved to oppose it by an anticipated treachery.

So fell the Mameluke power in Egypt; and, though we may condemn the treachery which led to their massacre, we cannot lament the fact. If Mohammed Ali could have driven them to open battle, he did not want courage to have met them face to face. They had been the cruel oppressors of Egypt for generations. They had well earned their punishment. If men and women were merely animals, there would be no government preferable to an enlightened despotism. Such was the despotism of Mohammed Ali; but the despotism of the Mamelukes had been selfish, savage, and merciless. They had fought over Egypt as wolves fight over a carcase. Under Mohammed's care the mummy nation, so long bound hand and foot, came to life. Some day it may gather strength and grope its way from the grave-cavern of slavery upwards toward the light and sunshine of freedom. To Egypt and to all nations God send that day, and speedily.

A GOOD THING.

I AM ashamed to confess that I have been a thief. It is humiliating to reflect that, at an earlier period of my career, I should at any time have so far forgotten myself as to have been guilty of the vulgar offence of petty larceny from the person. It is sad to remember, moreover, that, this being my third mistake of that nature, I was condemned for it to five years' penal servitude. Doubly humiliating it was when, after having been liberated on a ticket-of-leave for good conduct, I discovered how many professions were open to me of a far more lucrative character than my former calling, and altogether beyond the reach of the law.

It occurred to me that, with a small capital, say fifteen pounds, I might be able in a short time to realise almost an independence for one in my position, by very simple means, and quite honestly—that is to say, when viewed in connexion with some successful business operations in the highest walks of commerce which have come within my notice.

Accordingly, on my release, I went to an acquaintance of mine, a pawnbroker with whom I had formerly done business in another way, and stated my intention of turning over a new leaf. I hinted it was possible he might have in his possession a number of valuable articles, such as watches, rings, and so forth, which, for certain reasons, it would be inadvisable to offer for sale; but for which he might, nevertheless, be glad to find a market. Singularly enough, he had. I proffered my services to assist in disposing of these articles, for the very reasonable commis-

sion of five per cent. My overtures being accepted, I requested my friend to make me out pawn-tickets for all the trinkets, priced at their full value, thirty pounds. Having done so, he then entrusted the tickets to my charge, and handed me in advance the commission of thirty shillings.

With a portion of this money I paid for the following advertisement in a daily paper:

£15 WANTED for ten days by a professional gentleman. Eight pounds will be paid for the accommodation, and property deposited worth double the amount. Address, &c.

From about twenty replies I selected one with a country post-mark, and in female handwriting. After some correspondence with this lady—a lodging-house keeper in a sea-side town—she was prevailed upon to advance the money on my terms, which were, Item, my acceptance at ten days for twenty-three pounds. Item, the deposit of the pawn-tickets for thirty pounds' worth of valuable jewellery.

When the acceptance became due, I was unavoidably called out of town on important business, and did not return for some days; in fact, not until the estimable matron, finding the acceptance dishonoured, had endeavoured to recover her money by redeeming some of the pledges. She had taken out goods to the amount of ten pounds, but considering they were not worth the money, refused to redeem any more. The pawnbroker, however, knew as well as I did that the tickets, being actually in circulation, would be sure to come back again some day, and to result in his getting rid of the property at a very good profit. This in course of time actually occurred, for the worthy lady on discovering that the goods were pledged for more than they were worth, was quite sharp enough to dispose of the tickets one by one, for a small premium, among her continually changing constituency of lodgers; by this means she partially recuperated the amount she had lost, and carried out my truly fraternal principle of sharing our losses as well as our joys and sorrows among our brethren in the world. Agonising reflection to a well balanced mind like mine, it cost her four pounds fifteen. *I* would have made money by it!

During the hours of my retirement from the busy scenes of life (at the expense of my country), I had possessed ample opportunities for reflecting on the inestimable blessings of a free press to an enlightened community. I now proceeded to embody the result of those reflections.

I first of all made friends, at some trouble and not a little expense for liquor, with a porter in the employ of Messrs. Danton and Birch, the celebrated auctioneers in Moon-street, City, and I ultimately succeeded in prevailing on that porter, for a handsome consideration, to take charge of some letters that would be addressed to me, but to "his care," at his masters' offices. I impressed upon his mind the necessity of watchfulness, lest any of these letters should miscarry into his employers' hands.

Having thus secured one of the most respect-

able addresses in London, I next purchased ten pounds' worth of postage stamps, and then sent the subjoined advertisement to three daily newspapers, directing it to be inserted every other day: three insertions in each paper only:

THE advertiser, being in the enjoyment of **A GOOD THING**, is willing to impart it to a select number of subscribers. This is *bonâ fide*. Send thirteen postage stamps and a directed envelope to "M., Esq., care of "H. W.," at Messrs. Danton and Birch, Moon-street, City.

This sort of advertisement being rather a stale artifice in itself, I depended for its success, first, on the unimpeachable respectability of the address, and, next, on the manner in which I intended to work it.

At the end of a week, my nine advertisements had brought me one hundred and eighty-four replies. Each reply contained the addressed envelope and thirteen postage stamps. If you think I stole the postage stamps and bolted, you wrong me—you entirely mistake the chastening influence of meditation and retirement on a just and sensitive mind. What I did was this:—In each of the directed envelopes, I folded up the thirteen stamps I had received, *together with thirteen more*, in a neat piece of paper containing only these words and figures:

See Genesis xlii. 35.

Imagine the surprise and curiosity of my one hundred and eighty-four clients, when, on opening the letter, each found twenty-six stamps returned for the thirteen he had forwarded, and had turned up the quotation, "And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, behold every man's bundle of money was in his sack."

I stopped my advertisements for a week. Still a few straggling applications dropped in, making the total number of replies two hundred and twenty-seven.

Now, I knew very well that out of my two hundred and twenty-seven constituents, each of whom had received a present of thirteen postage stamps, there would hardly be one who would not apply to me again. In a general way, if a fish take your bait and be not hooked, he will come back to you. Most of my fish would reason thus: "I cannot lose anything, for, being thirteen postage stamps in pocket, I risk nothing by a second venture." But I depended most of all on securing in each of my clients the very best advertising medium I could desire; for I notice that whereas people who get stupidly swindled, are apt to hold their tongues about it, persons successful in matters of doubtful issue are invariably anxious to inform their friends how very shrewd they have been. In a week I resumed my advertisements; three more insertions.

I had not miscalculated the result. No fewer than one hundred and ninety-four applications came from "original shareholders." At the end of ten days the total number of my subscribers amounted to seventeen hundred and forty-eight.

You will guess, perhaps, that I *now* kept all the stamps. You misjudge me cruelly, and do

injustice to the salutary lessons of confinement and contemplation. I returned the stamps of eight hundred of the applicants, with thirteen more enclosed in each envelope, and the same reference to Genesis: taking care to reply to only half the letters from *each* town. Then I inserted my last advertisement.

THE GOOD THING.—The advertiser requests the indulgence of his correspondents; they are so numerous, it is utterly impossible to reply to all by return. He assures them, however, that each client shall receive due attention in rotation.

In a fortnight I was inundated with letters. They came from all parts of the kingdom. Many of them were stamped with coronets, crests, and monograms, that surprised me, though I had made some proficiency in the study of such devices on spoons, in bygone years. My friend the porter brought the letters to my lodgings every morning and evening, on a pair of hand-trucks, until in all I had received twelve thousand four hundred and seventy-one. Then Messrs. Danton and Birch had their attention directed to the fact of their house being used as my address. They surprised their porter in the act of "running" a cargo of my letters; him they discharged; the letters they confiscated. It grieves me to reflect on the melancholy fate of the porter, likewise on the number of postage stamps diverted from their proper channel. It is fair to say, though, that I believe Messrs. Danton and Birch religiously returned every postage stamp that fell into their hands. This is highly satisfactory to a mind, &c. Even I could have done no more.

You will very likely think that I *now* stopped the correspondence? Not quite correct, even now. Honesty is ever the best policy. First, I took the precaution of removing my letters, my valuable stamps, and my valuable self, into the country. Then, from my rural retreat, I proceeded to impart to my twelve thousand four hundred and seventy-one constituents, the grand arcanum and mystery of "The Good Thing." Although at a tremendous sacrifice of stamps, I held myself pledged to reply to each correspondent, as an honourable and a professional man.

That my privacy might not be disturbed by disagreeable inquiries, I took the precaution to forward my letters twice a week to London in a bale, to my dear friend the pawnbroker, for the sake of the London post-mark. He posted them for me at the "General."

It took exactly a month to complete my extensive correspondence. No postage stamps were returned *this* time; but each letter contained the following piece of advice, neatly inscribed on the best baronial cream-laid note (and in my opinion it is a precept more priceful than postage stamps, and should be written in letters of gold):

To inquirers for the Good Thing: See Luke x. 37. Go and do likewise.

With a view to attract into the paths of honesty and virtue those of my misguided

brethren still pursuing the highly reprehensible occupation of vulgar robbery, I subjoin my balance-sheet, which cannot fail to prove an incentive to the practice of honest labour for daily bread. In proof of its having taught me the beauties of rectitude, I wish to call attention to one item it contains. I refer to income-tax. My retiring and gentle nature could not brook a "return," to undergo the scrutiny of a curious surveyor; but a recent number of the Times contains the following notification: "The Chancellor of the Exchequer begs to acknowledge the receipt of the second half of a Bank of England note for ten pounds, on account of income-tax, from M., Esq." Need I add that M. stands for *Me*?

I wish to add a general moral.

To steal in the lump from any one person is disreputable and foolish, besides rendering you amenable to the law; but so to conduct your negotiations as to distribute a given loss (*your* profit) among the largest possible body of constituents, is the true theory of commercial prosperity.

THE BALANCE SHEET.

| Dr. | | £ | s. | d. |
|---|--|------|----|----|
| To cash received: | | | | |
| Commission from pawnbroker . . . | | 1 | 10 | 0 |
| Capital negotiated | | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| Postage stamps received from 12,471 clients | | 675 | 10 | 3 |
| | | £692 | 0 | 3 |
| Cr. | | £ | s. | d. |
| By cash paid: | | | | |
| Paid advertisements for loan . . . | | 0 | 12 | 0 |
| Paid advertisements, 1st series of The Good Thing | | 1 | 17 | 6 |
| Paid stamps returned, 227 clients . . | | 12 | 5 | 11 |
| Postage of ditto | | 0 | 18 | 11 |
| Paid advertisements, 2nd series of The Good Thing | | 1 | 17 | 6 |
| Paid stamps returned, 800 clients . . | | 43 | 6 | 8 |
| Postage of ditto | | 3 | 6 | 8 |
| Paid last advertisement | | 0 | 16 | 6 |
| Paid postage, 12,471 letters | | 51 | 19 | 3 |
| Stationery | | 11 | 5 | 0 |
| Paid income-tax | | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| | | 188 | 5 | 11 |
| Balance in hand, being nett profit . | | 553 | 14 | 4 |
| | | £692 | 0 | 3 |

OLD HARVEST-HOMES.

It is the fashion of the day to organise and regulate every popular meeting, whether secular and social or religious, with military precision. No church or school can be inaugurated without a programme of processions, banner-bearings, music, speech-making, and marching, &c., nor can two or three score village children eat bread-and-butter in company save to the sound of Rule Britannia and See the Conquering Hero comes. No one, however, who has had much to do with villagers, especially with young villagers, can doubt the advantages of discipline; and if system be sometimes mis-

placed and carried too far, we must take the good with the evil, and not grumble. At the same time, it is indisputable that individualities of character do get lost under this process, and especially at such simple pleasure meetings as hay and harvest festivals. There the amusements of the guests are now prescribed for them, with their diet, instead of being left to themselves and their own resources. Thus we gradually lose the family character which used to distinguish such feasts, held in the farmer's kitchen, cooked and served by the farmer's wife and daughters, and binding master to man in a way unknown in these days of monster cut-and-dried formalities.

Let us see what we lose by the modern system. Certainly not wit, for the witty element appears to be wholly wanting in the composition of the English peasant. His jests are very sorry, and, like his repartee, broad and personal. After twenty years' association with the agricultural poor of a midland county, the writer cannot recal more than one or two peasants' jokes which are capable of provoking a smile by their intrinsic merit. We need only turn to George Eliot's inimitable account of the harvest-home supper in Adam Bede, and to that of the conversation at the Rainbow in Silas Marner, to have a fair standard of labourers' wit, and of the style of humour which commends itself to the agricultural mind. Of jests, as of favourite games, stories, songs, and music, the principal charm appears to consist in repetition. Nothing that has once earned a place in the approbation of villagers ever becomes stale or unprofitable in their opinion. The oftener games are played, and songs sung, the better they are appreciated. Villagers, like children listening to a story, love to know exactly what is coming. They wish the programme of the after-dinner or after-supper amusements, like the bill of fare of roast beef and plum-pudding, to be always the same as last year's. The labourers of to-day prefer the stories told, the dramas acted, and the songs sung, by their fathers and grandfathers, to new-fangled compositions which have never taken firm root in the village mind. They find sufficient variety for their tastes in the inevitable differences and inequalities seen from season to season as new actors arise to take popular parts devolving on them by reason of the death or retirement of predecessors. Speculations as to whether Ben's mantle has fallen on Philip, comparisons between Ben and Philip, and retrospective glances at former performers before Ben and Philip were, furnish their favourite staple of conversation, while a new song (if an old one revived, so much the better) or a virgin speech given by one of the young gentlemen from the house, is highly admired and applauded.

The harvest-suppers at my old home, which I will call Sheepfold, are now a thing of the past; but I well remember the pleasure with which we used to attend them, and confess to having listened year after year to the same tales and the same old-world songs with almost

as great an interest, though not with an equally agitating anxiety, as that with which I awaited the *début* of some one of my young brothers addressing the guests for the first time. With what eagerness we used to watch the glance of the kindly eyes now closed for ever, and treasure each word from the loving lips, round which would play a modest nervous smile, where smile will never play again.

Little conversation would prevail during supper. Eating is too serious a matter on such occasions to bear divided attention; but as the last helping of pudding was given (half of which was usually packed in a basket under the table, for the children at home, half eaten at leisure), a buzz of talk would begin. This was preliminary to settling in to pipes and beer; the pipes, however, were not lighted until the form had been gone through of inquiring whether the mistress objected to tobacco. A deprecating nod having implied "No," with more courtesy than truth, we were speedily all enveloped in clouds of smoke. Then came the toasts and speeches. The Queen disposed of, the squire and his lady were toasted. Thanks were returned by the former in a speech both grave and gay, winding up with a retrospect of the farming operations of the year. The clergyman's health was then drunk and acknowledged. We young ones now came in for our share of honour. The guests drank to the health of the squire's daughter and her band of brothers, with special mention of any who might happen to be absent; and appropriate songs were sung after the names of the travellers or soldier. The bailiff and schoolmaster were then toasted, and duly returned thanks. Then we all joined in toasting "Speed the Plough;" and then began the real business of the evening.

Four or five of the guests disappeared to prepare for the grand dramatic performance of *The Husbandman and Serving-man*, sung by Mr. Joseph Bird, carter, and Mr. Carriss, butcher. During this interval we were thrown on our own resources, and repartee grew rife. Woe to the unhappy wight, if any such were present, whose banns had been published in church on the preceding Sundays! He was badgered from far and near; was particularly asked how many of his spurs he had assumed; and his neighbours were warned against this dangerously equipped knight, &c. &c. We used to fancy that this favourite joke (of the origin of which the speakers themselves were entirely ignorant) might contain some romantic allusion to the youthful knight watching his arms and keeping a vigil; but were somewhat disappointed when Notes and Queries referred us to the Scotch and north-country word for "inquire," "speer," which would apply to "asking banns," and would easily change into *spur* and *spurs*. Anyhow, thus the time would pass until the return of Messrs. Bird and Carriss, bearing their respective insignia of office—spade, rake, and whip, and besom, shovel, and hat with gold band.

This dialogue is spoken of in an article in

the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, vol. *xlvi.*, 1863, and the writer, Mr. E. T. B. Rathery, considers its moral to be the same as that of La Fontaine's fable, *Le Chien et le Loup*, namely, the proud superiority of the husbandman, as synonymous with yeoman and freeholder, over the serving-man who serves a master for wages. The spirit which some years since animated the independent class of small proprietors breathes in every line of the well-known ballad, *The Yeoman of Suffolk*. The Husbandman may have had the same origin, as indeed the possessive pronoun in verse eight would seem to imply; but in our village it had lost this association, and its significance consisted in the superiority conceded to agriculture over domestic service. The palm is awarded to agriculture in the tenth verse, which was triumphantly sung in chorus by all the company present. Mr. Chappel, in his work on *Popular English Music*, gives the air belonging to *The Husbandman*, though also called "I am the Duke of Norfolk." The tune to which our friends sang their recitative bears sufficient resemblance to this air to indicate a common origin, the principal difference consisting in the time and the value of the notes.

THE HUSBANDMAN.

As sung by Joseph Bird, Carter, and Benjamin Carriss, Butcher.

1.

Well met, well met, my friend,
Upon the highway riding,
So simple all alone as you stand,
And all in a little space
I will help you to a place
Where you may be a serving-man.

2.

Oh no, my brother dear, what makes you to inquire
Of any such things at my hand?
I have a thing to show,
Whereby you soon shall know
That I am a downright husbandman.

3.

Kind sir, but we do eat
Our most delicate fine meat,
Our fish, our capon, and our swan;
Our palates are so fine,
We drink sugar in our wine—
There's diet for a serving-man.

4.

Now as for your fish and capon,
Give me some beans and bacon,
Some butter and some cheese now and then.
We're* always pigs and sows
There in our farmer's yard—
There's diet for the husbandman.

* In the midland counties the two auxiliary verbs are used indiscriminately, thus: "We are always got pigs and sows;" "I am going to London to-morrow, Ben;" "Oh, have you, sir? I hope you are not got to stay there, long." The fourth line of verse four has probably been altered into the common lingua of the people singing.

5.

Now, kind sir, but we do wear
Our clothes both rich and rare,
Our coats with gold lace upon,
Our shirts as white as milk,
Our stockings made of silk—
There's clothing for the serving-man.

6.

As for your clothes so rare,
Give me stout shoes to wear,
Clods for to trample upon;
Give me a good great-coat,
And in my purse a groat—
There's clothing for the husbandman.

7.

There, now, kind sir, it is a fine thing
To ride out with the queen,
Either lord, duke, or any such one,
To hear the horns to blow,
See hounds run in a row—
There's pleasure for the serving-man!

8.

My pleasure's more than that—
To see my oxen fat;
A large stack of hay by them stand;
My reaping and my mowing,
My plowing and my sowing—
There's pleasure for the hus-band-man.

9.

Kind sir, I must confess,
And grant you the request,
All things must be added to you.
Unto me it is most painful,
To you it is most gainful—
I wish I was a hus-band-man.

10.

(In chorus.)

So now, good people all,
Both great and small,
Let us pray for the good of the land;
And let us all for ever
Do the best of our endeavour
For to maintain the hus-band-man.

While the vocalists were resting, the "call" was generally passed on to the story-teller of the village, Loasby, the old sexton, who, with the most extraordinary gravity and faultless memory, would relate, word for word, an old allegory called *The Pack of Cards*, or, as Loasby called it, *The Deck of Cards*. This was a highly popular story, owing, no doubt, to its allegorical character, always a favourite form of fiction with poor people and children, whose tastes in literature, for obvious reasons, are much alike. On none of the upturned faces around was a smile to be seen; and if a new visitor, on hearing the remarkable memoria technica for the first time, betrayed some amusement, he was immediately shamed into gravity by the wondering glances turned on him. To give the telling of this allegory due effect, the narrator, as he sat at the head of the table, should spread his Pack of Cards solemnly out before his audience and refer to them. Master Loasby would proceed as follows:
"The title is called the Soldier's Prayer and Homily Book of the 306th Regiment of Foot.

"And when the congregation came into church, they all took their seats, and those that had books pulled them out; but this poor soldier had neither Bible nor Prayer-book, nothing only this here deck of cards, and he pulled them out and laid them before him. He looked first upon one and then upon another card as he sat, and the sergeant of the company saw him, and said, 'Richard, put up those cards, else after the divine service is over you are my prisoner.'

"What for?" said the soldier.

"For playing a game of cards in the church," said the sergeant.

"No," said the soldier, 'I did not play a game of cards in the church, for I was only looking at a deck.'

"No matter at all about that, you are my prisoner."

"Well," said the soldier, 'where must I go?'

"Before the mayor," said the sergeant.

"Well and good," said the soldier.

"When they came to the mayor, he was at dinner; but when the mayor came out, he said, 'Well, sergeant, what have you to do with me to-day?'

"Sir, I have brought this man before your honour for playing a game of cards in the church."

"What, that man?" said the mayor.

"Yes, your honour."

"What have you got to say for yourself, soldier?"

"Much, sir."

"Good, I hope," said the mayor; 'for if not, you shall be punished the severest that ever man was punished.'

"Sir, I have been five weeks on the march, and have got but little money to subsist on—to buy pipeclay, blacking, washing, and other things, which is necessary for a soldier to want. I had neither a Bible nor Church Prayer-book, nothing only this deck of cards; so I pulled them out, and laid them before me as I sat, first looking upon one and upon another."

"So I began with the ace; that is one pip, you all know. When I see the ace, the one, it puts me in mind that there is but one God over you and me and all the world, sir. When I see the two pips, they put me in mind of the Father and Son. When I see the three, it puts me in mind of the Father, Son, and of the Holy Ghost. When I see the four, it puts me in mind of the four Evangelists who appended the Gospels, that is, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. When I see the five, it puts me in mind of the five virgins; there were ten, but five were foolish. When I see the six pips, it puts me in mind that in six days God finished all His work, which He had made and created; and God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good. And when I see the seven, it puts me in mind that God rested on the seventh day, and God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it. When I see the eight, it puts me in mind of the eight righteous persons which God saved when

He destroyed the world, that is, Noah and his wife, and their three sons (and their wives), that is, Shem, Ham, and Japhet. When I see the nine, it puts me in mind of the nine lepers' (or, as Master Loasby invariably pronounced and, I have little doubt, understood it, *leopards*) 'that were cleansed; there were ten, but nine never returned to give thanks, save only this poor stranger, and he was a Samaritan. When I see the ten, I remember the ten commandments which God gave Moses on the mount, on two tables of stone, written thereon by the finger of God.'"

(Here he takes the knave, and laying that aside, passes on to the king.)

"When I see the king, it puts me in mind of the great King of Heaven. When I see the queen, it puts me in mind of the Queen of Sheba, who came from the furthestmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of King Solomon. She brought forth a hundred boys and girls, all dressed in girls' clothing, and set before King Solomon for him to tell which were boys and which girls; but he could not till he called for water to wash them. The boys washed round their wrists, and the girls up to their elbows, so King Solomon, I suppose, told by that. When I count how many pips there is in a deck of cards, I find three hundred and sixty-five, sir; and there is three hundred and sixty-five days in a year, sir. When I count how many cards there is in a deck, I find fifty-two; and there is fifty-two weeks in a year, sir. When I count how many tricks there is, I find thirteen, sir; and there is thirteen months in a year, sir (lunral, you know, sir). So you see that this deck of cards is almanack, and Bible, and Common Church Prayer-book to me, sir."

"Well, soldier, you have given a good account of all the cards but one."

"Which be that, sir?"

"The knave."

"Well, sir, I could give your honour as good an account of that card as of any of the rest, sir, if your honour would not be offended."

"Not at all, soldier, except you make me the knave."

"Well, sir, the greatest that I know is the man that brought me before your honour."

"Well, soldier, I do not know whether he is the greatest knave, but I am sure that he is the greatest fool; and with that the mayor thanked him, and ordered him some bread and cheese and beer, gave him a piece of money, and told him to go about his business, saying that the soldier was the cleverest man he had ever seen in all his life."

This Eastern kind of recreation ended, the sexton, having earned his right to the *call*, would appeal to the village mason for one of his songs. Smoking Spiritualised was perhaps the most in favour, but it is not given here as being widely known, from its slightly altered burden, "Think of this when you're smoking tobacco."

Mason Newman, having been duly applauded, would call on some musical neighbour for a

song; he, in his turn, would call for another of the sexton's stories, or for a rude play, called *The Dentist*, and acted by some of the company, who represented the doctor, his horse, the patient, and the nurse. The patient's teeth (broken pieces of tobacco-pipe inserted in the mouth) were drawn with the fire-tongs, and the fainting sufferer was revived by an energetic use of the bellows.

"How I went to the Coronation," and *King Cole*, were favourite songs, scarcely less so *Wellington* and *Blucher*. Again the mason's really beautiful mellow voice would be put in requisition for his great song of *The Blackbird*; and after that the blacksmith would give us, "I will hang my Harp on a Willow Tree," &c.

But the evening being now far advanced, the time had arrived for Mr. Carriss's popular ditty, *Poor Little Mo*. While singing it, Mr. Carriss paraded the room with a basket of wares on his arm, and interrupted his song from time to time to make impromptu offers of cottons and hooks to the ladies present, and of knives and boot-laces to the men, taking up the thread of his song again very cleverly after concluding a bargain or receiving a rebuff. A ventriloquist might have envied the pretended Jew pedlar his power of changing his voice as he alternately attempted by well-turned compliments to insinuate himself into the good graces of the ladies, and to cajole the men into becoming purchasers, now and then assuming the tone of an injured man, and soliloquising on the stinginess of his audience before resuming the ballad.

POOR LITTLE MO.

My name it is *Mo Samuel*, a poor little Jew;
From the *Minories* I come wi' dis 'ere ting in view,
To get all vat I can, and my customers try,
If I runs half a mile, never mind, so they buy.

("Vell 'ere dey are all, a ha'penny apiece.
Vell, tree a penny—take four, five." "Give me six." "Give you six? Vat, do you tink I stole 'em? Vell, take them wid you.")

Dey say no,
Off dey go;
Den I runs,
Wid my bunns,

Wid my sweetmeats and heart-cakes,
Through the mud, till my feet aches,
Den all de way back I am forced for to go,
An' dey won't spend a farden with poor little *Mo*.

Poor little Mo.

An' dey won't spend a farden with poor little *Mo*.
Dey calls me a deep an' a knowing one too;
All de harm dey can say is to call me a Jew.
Dey are right—and vat den? I am sorry, I says,
I can't call ye Christians, so go your ways.

("But stop, will ye buy a good razor? I'll send ye von cheap." "I suppose you stole it?" "Stole it! Dat cuts me to de very heart." "You're a fine blade, but, if you don't mind, you'll get roughly handled.")

Den dey looks
In my box,
An' I cry
Will you buy?

Wid my slippers and my sticks,
Dey do play sich slippery tricks;
Dey tink I've all profit, but little do they know
How ill used and abused all day is poor *Mo*.

Poor little Mo.

How ill used and abused all day is poor *Mo*.
Through the city I tramps wid my goods of ev'ry kind,
In my shop round my neck you'll each article find.
By the Bank an' de 'Change, and St. Paul's too, I stand,
But I meets my best friends wen I come by the Strand.

("Ah! dere is all my best customers, dat always gives me de ready money, and never abuses me. I forget all my troubles ven I gets their smiles; an' I says, 'Bless my heart, vat a bargain you're got! Vy, you've got it merely for an old song: ")

Den dere smiles
Pay my toils.
Wi' vat glee
Do I see

All my customers' faces,
An' all their good graces!

Den my heart fill'd in gratitude, homeward I go,
An' dere's no one so happy as poor little *Mo*—

Poor little Mo.

An' who's den so happy as poor little *Mo*?

One very pleasing feature of these harvest-suppers was the confidence felt by our village friends that, in joining their festivities, we did so for our own amusement, and not merely to see them feast. Never was a greater or better deserved compliment paid to good breeding and endurance than an involuntary one received by the mistress on one occasion from a labourer; who said with the utmost complacency as the poor smoke-dried lady (who specially detested the fumes of tobacco!) left the room, "How the mistress have enjoyed herself, toe be sure!" And so she really had, and so we all did, in spite of the smoky atmosphere. Our only regret was, that space did not admit of the presence of the wives and daughters of the guests. These festivals may not have been of an educational or South Kensingtonian character, but at least they ever served the purposes of innocent amusement, and of drawing together employers and employed. Nor were serious thoughts and allusions altogether out of place or impossible on these occasions. Though drollery and enjoyment were the rule, still in the later part of the evening the speakers would often make reference to the Giver and Preserver of the kindly fruits of the earth; and the tact and fluency of the good squire enabled him, without the slightest strain, to direct the thoughts of his workmen to the Great Master, whose labourers we all are, and whose harvest is the end of the world.

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MABEL'S PROGRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER VII. "TEMPORARY INSANITY."

BLANK stillness without Bramley Manor. Blank darkness, or at best a gloomy twilight, within. Voices hushed to a whispering utterance, painfully distinct in the silence. Stealthy footsteps creaking hither and thither through the dim rooms. No sound upon the long stone terrace, save the sighing of the wind amid the leafless elm-trees, as if it came laden with sorrow and secrecy, or the ghostly echo of one knew not what voices, lurking in some angle of its antique flagged pavement. In the moist conservatories rich flowers drooped their heavy heads and died untended. Upon the unrolled gravel of the garden walks, here and there a weed began to peer between the pebbles, and to encroach upon the borders. The last withered leaves lay unheeded where they fell, and the damp black earth of the flower-beds smelt like a new-made grave. And but a few hours had sufficed to make this change, and cast this desolation over the prosperous mansion. Walter arriving at night in the large resounding Hammerham railway station, saw Stephens's haggard face under the bright gaslight, and leaping from the carriage whilst the train was yet in motion, ran to him and seized his hand.

"Am I in time? Am I in time?" It was all he could say, and in the giddy confusion of his head, and the noise and movement around him, he seemed unable to comprehend the old clerk's answer. But when they were seated in a cab together, and rolling swiftly towards Bramley Manor, Stephens spoke again. "I've met every train from Holyhead since I sent the telegram, Mr. Walter. Every one."

"I came instantly. It was impossible to be here sooner. I did not lose a moment. Not one moment."

"I know, I know, Mr. Walter. But it seemed to me to be the only thing I could do to hang about the station and wait for you. They had some hope the sight of you might rouse him. And I felt somehow that I shouldn't have been astonished to see your face in the crowd at any minute. Though I

knew, mind you, that nothing short of a miracle could bring you here before this train."

"What is it, Stephens? It came upon me like a thunderbolt. The last accounts I had had from home, all well and cheerful, and then, within ten days—Oh, father, father!"

The lad covered his face, and burst into a fit of weeping that shook him from head to foot.

"Hush, hush!" cried Stephens, clutching him by the arm. "For God's sake, don't give way, Mr. Watty. You don't know—I was to tell you—you must be a man for the sake of your mother and Miss Charlewood. Heaven help the poor souls, they're in sore, sore affliction."

"Is my father's case hopeless? Are they sure? Is there no hope?—none?"

"He was alive when I left the Manor at eight o'clock this morning. But—I—I—Oh, Lord, Mr. Wat, I don't know how to tell you, my poor lad. You must think of the others, you know, and look at Mr. Clement, how he bears up with all *he* has to go through! See now, Walter," added Stephens, as the cab swept in at the open lodge gate, unmindful of forms and ceremonies in the solemnity of the moment, and speaking simply as an old man to a younger one—"see, now, you must make up your mind to bear a heavy trial. There's death in this house we're going to. Walter—your father has—has hastened his own end. He took laudanum last night, and never spoke after they found him insensible."

The vehicle stopped before the portico that Walter Charlewood had last quitted on his sister's wedding-day; joyous, prosperous, rich in this world's goods, and the spoiled idol of indulgent parents. There, in the dimly lighted hall, stood Clement. *Was* it Clement, this white-faced, haggard man, with sunken eyes, and deeply cut lines of suffering round his mouth? He stood quite still, and looked at Walter impassibly. The latter almost staggered as he alighted from the cab, and was fain to lean on the old man's shoulder who accompanied him.

"It is all over," said Clement.

"Oh, Clem, oh, Clem!" The weak trembling lad fell on his brother's breast, who opened his arms to receive him, as he might have done when Walter was a petted wayward child, and would come in their school-days to his elder brother for comfort or protection. The action loosed the pent-up fountain of his own tears, and for a while the two young men sobbed in

each other's arms, and those who stood by kept a reverent silence in the presence of that sacred sorrow. But Penelope had heard the cab stop, and came stealing down-stairs; and at her footstep Clement roused himself, and whispered Walter to be brave and strong, for the sake of the mother and sister, left now to their sole protection and care. The three young people spoke together in whispers for a few minutes after the first sad greetings. Their mother had fallen into a heavy slumber; but the moment she woke, Walter must go to her. As they turned to leave the hall, Clement put his hand on the clerk's shoulder.

"Stephens," he said, "I beg you to go and have some food and a glass of wine. It is prepared for you, and you need it greatly. Since early morning you have eaten nothing."

Stephens looked after his young master as he walked away.

"He forgets nobody; nobody—but himself," said the old man. "Well, I hope the others'll remember him. There are people in this world who are apt to think little of them that don't think much of themselves. More's the pity."

The wretched story that met Walter's ears was soon told. On the night of Clement's visit to Hazlehurst, he had found the household in alarm and horror on his return home. His father had been found in an arm-chair in his own room insensible, and with a phial containing laudanum lying near him. He was still breathing, but spite of all efforts to rouse him, and the prompt attention of Dr. Brett and another physician, who were sent for instantly, he never rallied or became conscious more. He had drank much more wine than evening than usual, as was proved by the nearly emptied decanter left on the dining-table. Had he taken the poison by mistake, and being already in a state of semi-stupor from the effects of the wine? Or was the act done knowingly, and with a full consciousness of the certain death that must ensue? No one could say positively. Clement explained to their old friend and medical attendant, Dr. Brett, that his father's mind had been for some days strained and racked by anxiety, and that the news of their business prospects received that day had been increasingly gloomy and discouraging. The doctors looked at each other and nodded gravely. Their skill, powerless to restore that motionless figure on the bed, with the handsome massive features, expressive in their stillness of profound eternal rest, was needed for the poor bereaved wife, who fell from one fit of shrieking hysterics into another, until nature was exhausted, and she sank into a heavy sleep, that lasted until late into the evening of Walter's arrival.

In the wretched days that ensued, and as the terrible truth dawned on the family—to Clement it had become already apparent—that in addition to the grief of Mr. Charlewood's death, and the added horror and misery caused by the manner of it, they would have to face commercial ruin and disgrace, it was curious to behold the different ways in which these different

human beings, all united by ties of affection, and all dwelling together in the closest familiarity, bore their lot.

After the first transport of genuine sorrow for his father's death, and as the prospect of the future began to unfold before him, the intense egotism of Walter's character—an egotism fostered by years of flattery and blind indulgence—displayed itself painfully. He would sit for hours over the fire in his mother's boudoir, sometimes silent and sullen, sometimes loudly bewailing his fate, always weakly craving for expressions of peculiar sympathy, for *his* misfortunes. His mother, although she sometimes had an uneasy sense of his failure to appreciate Clement's noble self-forgetfulness, still could rouse herself from her own deep despondent affliction to soothe her petted boy's feelings by all the means in her power. She would listen with the utmost patience and sympathy to his account of the "swells" who delighted in his society, and the light of whose countenance would now be lost to him. By whose fault? By whose?

Little mention was made among them of Augusta. A letter had been despatched to her, saying that Mr. Charlewood was very ill, and that no hope was entertained of his recovery, and close after that another announcing his death. The newly married couple would be in Rome by the time the letters reached them.

"Poor child," said Mrs. Charlewood, with a sob, "it's an awful blow to come upon her in her 'oney-moon. Breaking it all up, and bringing her back to a 'ouse of mourning like this."

Penelope Charlewood was not gentle by nature or habit, but she did strive to subdue the abruptness of her manner towards her bereaved mother, as she answered, "Mamma, would it grieve you very much if Augusta did not hurry back to England at once?"

"Well, love, I don't know that she could do any good 'ere. You know poor Gussy was never much 'at 'elping in trouble."

And then Penelope perceived that her mother knew Mrs. Malachi Dawson sufficiently well not to reckon largely upon any comfort or sympathy to be derived from that sensitive young lady.

Meanwhile, it became evident to Clement that the disaster which had overtaken their house was of a nature that forbade any hope of retrieval. All must go. If even by abandoning everything the firm could come out of the ruin free and clear from debt, he would not complain. But that consolation was not to be his. The more he examined into the state of the firm's affairs, the more hopeless it appeared to be to save anything from the wreck, and he found that his father had launched into many dangerous speculations unknown to him.

I have said that Mr. Charlewood was fond of power and jealous of it, and this feeling had shown itself lately in a growing tendency to keep Clement in a subordinate position in all their business relations, and even occasionally to act in direct opposition to his son's expressed opinion.

Clement broke the truth to his mother as gently as he could. He and Penelope had

already talked openly together of their circumstances. When Mrs. Charlewood learned that she would have to leave Bramley Manor, to resign the luxuries to which she had of late years been accustomed, and perhaps to sink into a poverty greater than she had ever known in her life, she bore the tidings with so little apparent depression as to astonish her children.

"Law! my dears," she said, "don't it all seem like dust in the balance, the money and the finery, when real affliction comes upon us? If he had been spared to us, I dare say I might have fretted over all this loss, and the come-down in the world, but now it don't seem as if anything like that was worth thinking about."

But for her children she grieved heartily. Walter was obliged to confess to his brother that he owed already considerable sums of money in Dublin."

"I'm very sorry for it, Wat. Your allowance was a very ample one. However, I'm not going to reproach you. Of course we must see about the sale of your commission at once, and also get rid of your horses, and whatever valuables there may be belonging to you. I should think that would realise more than enough to cover what you owe."

"And what am I to do then?"

"Do, Watty?"

"Of course the debts of honour must be paid. I had a run of bad luck at loo, and that cleaned me out awfully. But as to the others—well, the tradesmen took the risk; and if other folks lose thousands, they might make up their minds to lose twenties. Especially as they're a rascally lot, and charged me two hundred per cent more than the things were worth, just for the month or two's credit."

"Walter," said his brother, sternly, "let me hear no more of that cant. I don't do you the injustice to suppose that it comes from your heart. I understand perfectly from whom you thoughtlessly imitate it. And I know, too, how you estimate those from whom you have caught it. The friends of Walter Charlewood rich who would give the cold shoulder to Walter Charlewood poor, I think you and I are both able to put down at their proper value. But our just debts must be paid as far as we are able, even though we have to sell the coat off our backs."

Walter was subdued by his brother's determined manner, and said no more. But he complained so bitterly to his mother of Clement's settling everything as he chose, and giving him no voice in the matter, that Mrs. Charlewood ventured to speak timidly to her eldest son, and to sound him as to the possibility of the sale of Walter's commission being avoided. But Clement showed her at once, and conclusively, the complete fallacy of any such idea.

"Dear mother," he said, "if Wat could not manage to keep out of debt with the liberal allowance my father made him, do you suppose it is possible that he can live on his pay? No, no: it is out of the question, believe me. I will do all I can to make things fall as lightly on him as possible; but he must make up his mind to earn his bread now. There is no help for it."

There ~~was~~ no help for it. But Walter, beginning to make the astonishing and painful discovery—doubly painful when made so late—that the course of events shaped themselves without the smallest reference to his comfort and convenience, indulged in peevish grumblings against his brother, finding that more satisfactory and less absurd than to accuse the universe in general.

Once Penelope being present at one of these ebullitions, broke out into one of her old sharp stinging moods, and told Walter so many truths, conveyed with such searching, keen-edged words, that Mrs. Charlewood interposed to shield Walter from the storm he had provoked.

"There, there, Penny," said the poor, foolish, kindly woman, "don't be 'ard on your brother, love. If we can say nothing but 'arsh things to each other *now*, it is a sad, sad case."

"What things does he say of Clement?" retorted Penelope, casting a glance of withering scorn at Walter, who sat by the fire half whimpering, half defiant. "He to whine and complain of the special hardship of his case! Look at Clem. He has lost more than Walter ever dreamed of. The firm of Gandry and Charlewood was his idol. I don't say it is good to have idols at all; but at least his demanded some nobler offerings than can be supplied by tailors and billiard-markers. Clement's heart is cut—I know it, I see it—by the downfall of the great name and honourable supremacy of the house. He worked to maintain it. He will give his last crust to clear it of a stain before the eyes of all men. He has borne, in other ways, more than any of you know, without complaining. His first thought all along has been for others; but because he does not tear his hair and cry aloud like a spoilt baby, do you think he feels nothing? Walter Charlewood, I am full of faults, I know: I am neither meek, nor sweet, nor humble; but, as Heaven is my witness, I would rather cut off my right hand at this moment than give one needless pang to our brother's brave, constant, generous spirit, by my poor, pitiful, selfish cowardice. If I were a man, I would help those I love. Being a woman, I can but suffer for them; but I will do it silently, and with some decent rag of self-control."

CHAPTER VIII. A COUPLE OF LETTERS.

THE portion of my story that must next be told will be, perhaps, best presented in the following letters, the last of which was received about a fortnight subsequent to the arrival of the first at its destination.

LETTER I.

From Mrs. Malachi Dawson, in Rome, to Miss Charlewood, at Bramley Manor.

"Rome, Piazza di Spagna,
25th of November, 18—.

"In my first hurried letter, sent in reply to the awful tidings then just received, I feel, my dear Penelope, that I did not express myself sufficiently at length, nor in any way make clear to you my state of mind. How, indeed, was it possible to do so? So terrible and overwhelming a shock, to one whom you know to

be such a sadly nervous, sensitive creature as I am, naturally incapacitated me from writing with any self-command. But Malachi thinks that my nerves are now sufficiently strung up (by means of powerful tonics and generous living) to attempt the task. In the present state of sorrow and distress that you are all in, of course it was to be expected that you should be a little inclined to put me in the background, and to exhibit a very excusable selfishness in the proposition, which you make as coming from mamma, that we should return to England immediately. For myself (although I know I could be of no use to you, and, perhaps, on the contrary, shall cast on you the burthen of an invalid, for I do *not* think my health would stand a return to Bramley Manor under the present circumstances),—for myself, I say, I would hasten homeward without an hour's delay. But Malachi is, I assure you, very delicate. His little troublesome cough that you always persisted in saying was a nervous trick, but which I, alas! fear is indicative of constitutional weakness of the chest, *requires* a southern winter. You know, Penelope, my *first* duty is now to my husband. And how do you think we should bear to take possession of our new house close to Eastfield, just at this moment, when all the country is ringing with this terrible calamity that has befallen us? And Eastfield is so close to Hammerham, that we should be in the very focus of it all. Even here we are not safe. I took up the *Galignani* yesterday for half an hour, thinking to distract my thoughts a little, for they all tell me that the complete dulness consequent on our present necessary seclusion is highly injurious to me, when my eye lighted on a circumstantial account of the great failure of Gandry and Charlewood, with other details still more dreadful. I threw the horrid paper from me as if it had been a scorpion, and I had a fit of hysterics that lasted three-quarters of an hour. But, as I said, I don't blame *you* for not thinking of all these things.

"Malachi is the soul of generosity. Some men, in the natural disappointment of finding the woman they had married but half as rich as they had hoped, would visit some of their chagrin upon her. He, on the contrary, spares no endeavour to soothe my feelings. He sends his tenderest condolences to you all, and trusts that you are endeavouring to profit by these severe chastenings, and to turn your eyes from earthly matters to the only true source of comfort and consolation. If there is a sale of the furniture (*how* things can have reached such a pass is, I confess, a mystery to me; but, of course, Clement has managed for the best), I should like to have that little inlaid cabinet that stood in my dressing-room, and the Gobelin fire-screen. Malachi would wish them to be bought in, and will pay Clement whatever price may be agreed upon. We expect to be in England in the spring, and then Malachi joins me in hoping that mamma will come and stay with us for a time. Or you; or, indeed, both of you if we find it possible to accommodate you together. Ah, my dear Penelope, if you could see the

shocking idolatrous mummeries that go on here, you would shrink from your high-churchism in alarm to see whither it leads. I do wish that you would cultivate a more evangelical tone of mind. Let me know what is decided upon for Clement and Walter. Poor Watty, it will come terribly hard upon him; he was getting into such excellent society. And Clement never had any taste for that sort of thing, had he? Now, my dear Penny, I have tired myself and must cease; although I could go on expatiating on our great affliction much longer, if physical weakness permitted the effort. I send my fondest love to all. I hope you take every care of mamma: would that I could be with her! But, alas! the duty of a married woman to her husband is paramount. May Providence guide you all, and comfort you!

"I am ever,

"Your affectionate sister,
"AUGUSTA DAWSON."

Penelope Charlewood read this epistle from beginning to end, in silence; gave it to her mother, who also read it in silence; and then, taking it back, Penelope twisted it neatly and firmly into a tight roll, to which she set fire and held it until the flame scorched her fingers. Then she threw the ashes down and set her heel on them with a rigid, unmoved face.

LETTER II.

From Miss Fluke, Hammerham, to
Mrs. Dawson, Dublin.

"Hammerham, Dec. 14th, 18—.

"My dear Mrs. Dawson. In reply to your letter of the 9th instant, I sit down to give you all the information in my power. Believe me, my dear friend, that I sincerely sympathise with you and with your son, the Reverend Malachi, in this trial. I am sure that we should cordially agree in doctrine, and I regretted much that I had not an opportunity of becoming more closely knit with you in the bonds of Christian fellowship. Papa was well pleased with the Reverend Malachi's views, and found him extremely sound. Would that I could say the same of *all* our afflicted friends! But, alas! my friend, error is rampant among us (see *Ephesians*, vi. 12). However, I proceed to relate to you what I have been able to glean by diligent inquiry, in accordance with your request. You ask if the failure of G. and C. is so total and hopeless as the world reports? Yes; I am led to believe that but a very small matter can be snatched from the jaws—if I may so express myself—of the creditors. This may well surprise you, as it does me. But I fear, I greatly fear, that much wild speculation and extravagance was going on for some time. To whom to impute the blame, if blame there be, I know not. There is much and sore trouble in Hammerham consequent upon B. and C. having stopped payment, which, indeed, they say was the immediate cause of the catastrophe of G. and C. Papa has himself been a loser to the extent of fifty-seven pounds ten shillings and sixpence in consequence of the panic, which caused a run upon a local savings-bank, of

which he was one of the chief promoters. But he is strengthened to endure (see Psalm lvi. 12). And, besides, we have reason to believe that he will ultimately get the money back again. There was a sale of furniture, plate, carriages, horses, pictures, &c. &c. &c., begun at Bramley Manor on Tuesday last. Many influential families here—members of papa's congregation—have expressed strong objections to the publicity with which the whole affair was managed. There was no attempt, they say, to make the best of things before the eyes of the world. A sale by private contract would, I have reason to believe, have been soothing to the feelings of many of our wealthiest merchants. G. and C. have so long stood at the head of our Hammerham mercantile world, that the blazoning forth in broad day of all these painful details—as if G. and C. had been little huckstering tradesmen, who, of course, naturally *must* (according to the inscrutable decrees of an overruling Providence) be sold up now and then—has caused a good deal of annoyance. I went as soon as I heard the first whisper of misfortune, to offer my services, as a friend and as the daughter of a minister of the Gospel. Mrs. C. declined to see me. *Why*, I am entirely at a loss to imagine! The excuse she alleged was, that in the first days of her terrible bereavement, she did not feel *strong* enough to see me. But that, of course, is obviously absurd. P. C. I did see. Also C. C. and W. The latter is much softened by misfortune. May it be blessed to him! I left him a suitable tract. P. is as hard as ever. At least she seems so, but it is not for us to judge (Matthew vii. 1). But what can one expect of a person who abandons her own parish church, where the Word is preached in all its purity, to seek after strange idols with coloured glass and candles (I have been told they are *lighted* on saints' days. But this I do *not* believe), and sermons that only last fifteen minutes? I attended the sale at B. M. the first day, from motives of duty, and inspected *everything*. I suffered a good deal the next day from swelled feet, not having sat down for more than four hours. I grieved—I deeply grieved—over the evidences of profusion and worldly vanity, apparent in the most trifling matters. Of course, my dear Mrs. Dawson, I do not object—nor does papa—to the due and fitting expenditure of wealth on articles which add to the comfort of life according to our station. But what do you think of having patent spring mattresses on all the *servants'* beds? Every one of them. And the sheets linen. Coarse, I am willing to admit (Heaven forbid that I should bear hardly on my fellow-creatures), but all linen, every thread. I made a calculation when I came home of the sum that could have been gained by the difference between the price of these linen sheets and good unbleached cotton ones; and I found that five annual subscriptions to the Christian Reminder, and a life governorship in Duckrell schools, might have been got with the money! And then think of the souls of the poor servants! What can they make of

their catechism, when they are accustomed to such extravagance? C. C. has, I hear, accepted a situation as clerk, or something of the kind—managing man, some say, but he has *managed* his own affairs so shockingly that I should think that was not likely—to a builder's business in London. He might have got something to do here; but the family shrank from remaining in Hammerham. And no wonder! They leave tomorrow. I endeavoured to worm out their address from P., but in vain. Ah, my friend, the nether millstone is soft compared with the hardness of the unregenerate heart! I hope you have good news of my Christian friend, Augusta. Jane was much attached to her. It would be very agreeable for all parties if, when the Reverend Malachi and his wife return to England, Jane could stay with them for a time. She is ordered a little change of air in the spring. We are all going away (D. V.) from Hammerham for a short excursion; but we are seven, exclusive of papa, and it would be convenient for us to get even *one* member of our party disposed of elsewhere. Augusta would find it a great boon to have my sister Jane with her; especially if the Reverend Malachi's parish is a large and populous one. I believe I have answered all your questions. It will give me great pleasure to hear from you at any time; and to be the recipient of any charitable donation you may choose to make to the good cause. The Infant Bosjisman Baptism Mission is at the present moment in want of funds. Papa desires his kind regards to you; and

"I am,

"My dear Mrs. Dawson,

"Yours in all Christian sincerity,

"H. FLUKE."

AN EPISODE OF FOX.

In the year 1802, Fox* paid a visit to Paris. He was in the zenith of his fame. The object of his visit was to ransack the archives of the French Foreign Office, with a view to the completion of his history of James the Second. He was well received by Bonaparte (then only first

* The Right Hon. Charles James Fox was the youngest son of the Right Hon. Henry Fox, afterwards first Lord Holland, and Lady Georgiana Lennox. He was born in 1749, was educated at Eton and Hertford College, Oxon; he was member of parliament for Midhurst (1768), as a supporter of the Duke of Grafton's administration. He was Lord of the Admiralty under Lord North (1770-1772); Lord of the Treasury (1773-1774), in opposition to Lord North during the American war. He was returned for Westminster in 1780. In 1782 he was appointed Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, under Lord Rockingham, and resigned on his death. Under the coalition ministry of 1783 he resumed office as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He resigned on the defeat of the India bill in 1783; he headed the opposition to Pitt's ministry, and withdrew from parliament in 1797. In 1802 (the year of his visit to Paris) he was returned for Westminster. On Pitt's death, in 1806, he again took office as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

consul), and the reminiscences which we have before us of this trip are highly interesting, inasmuch as they give us an insight into the private character of one of our greatest orators and statesmen.

Accompanied by Mrs. Fox, by Mr. Trotter, his former secretary, and by Mr. (afterwards Lord) St. John, Fox first visited Flanders and Belgium. In those days express trains were unknown, and "coaching" was the order of the day. Along the monotonous roads the time was beguiled by reading Fielding. At the Hague a picture of the massacre of De Witt by the populace excited in Mr. Fox emotions of the deepest disgust. We find an expression of his feelings in his history of James the Second. It is the key to a page of history. He says:

"The catastrophe of De Witt, the wisest, best, and most truly patriotic minister that ever appeared on the public stage, as it was an act of crying ingratitude, so it is the most completely discouraging example that history offers to the lovers of liberty. If Aristides was banished, he was also recalled; if Dion was repaid for his services to the Syracusans by ingratitude, that ingratitude was more than once repented of; if Sydney and Russell died upon the scaffold, they had not the cruel mortification of falling by the hands of the people: ample justice was done to their memory, and the very sound of their names is still animating to every Englishman attached to their glorious cause. But with De Witt fell also his cause and his party; and though a name so respected by all who revere virtue and wisdom, when employed in their noblest sphere, the political service of the public, must undoubtedly be doubly dear to his countrymen, yet I do not know that even to this day any public honours have been paid by them to his memory."

The religious views entertained by Mr. Fox denote the high tone of a sound mind.

"On the score of religion" (says the author of the Reminiscences) "I perceived that he did not merely *tolerate*—for that word would be misapplied to his disposition on sacred matters—rather he conceived that all human beings enjoyed the exercise of religious worship, and inoffensive citizens *did not require the permission of others* for this mental enjoyment, but that all were entitled to honour the Deity without reproach or reflection. There never escaped from his lips one disrespectful word regarding religion; never one doubtful smile was seen on his countenance in any place of worship, nor the slightest derogation from a solemn and respectful regard for all around him, either in the Catholic Netherlands or in Presbyterian Holland."

At Brussels, Mr. Fox received letters from his friends urging him to hasten his journey. Lord Holland and his family were anxiously expecting him. He takes up his quarters in Paris at the Hôtel de Richelieu. Racine is his favourite dramatic author; he visits the theatre to see Phèdre, Mademoiselle Duchoëis taking

the part. "On this occasion he was recognised by the audience in the pit; every eye was fixed on him, and every tongue cried 'Fox! Fox!' The whole audience stood up, and the applause was universal. He was embarrassed, and so unwilling to receive the applause, as meant for him, that he could not be prevailed upon to stand forward; nor, when his name repeatedly announced left no doubt of the matter, could he bring himself to make any obeisance or gesture of thanks. Perhaps through the unaffected modesty of his nature, he seemed wanting on this occasion in courtesy to the audience. The first consul was in his box. The light was thrown from the stage upon his face, so as to give it an unfavourable and ghastly effect. He was received with some applause, but much inferior to that bestowed upon Mr. Fox."

After devoting a few days to the sights of Paris, the real object of the journey is attended to.

On the fourth day after his arrival in Paris he began his labours. Lord St. John, Mr. Adair, and Mr. Trotter accompanied and regularly attended Mr. Fox at the French archives from eleven to three. He read and translated himself, with alacrity and good humour, and exacted no trouble from others in which he did not take full share. Amongst the many visitors who called at the Hôtel de Richelieu was Kosciusko. He is described as a man of small stature, with nothing prepossessing in his appearance. "He did not speak much, and his manner was extremely simple. Mr. Fox's reception of him was warm and friendly; they seemed happy at meeting; the advocate of America and of the blacks could not but cherish the champion of the oppressed Poles. Kosciusko was apparently in good health, though his wounds never allowed him to be perfectly well."

Fox had been twelve days at Paris, and had not seen Bonaparte except imperfectly at the theatre, so he resolved to go to the next levee. Mr. Merry was then the English ambassador, and the applications for presentation were so numerous that he was compelled to shelter himself under the rule that a letter from Lord Hawkesbury must be handed to him introducing each person. Before the levee our friends pay a visit to Talleyrand.

Talleyrand, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, lived at Neuilly. We arrived (we quote our author) between eight and nine p.m., as it was usual to open the house every evening at that time for all the corps diplomatique and strangers of distinction. Mr. Fox was received with marked attention. M. Talleyrand possesses by no means an agreeable exterior. The circle in the evening was at first entertaining; the variety of characters was great; the Italian princess, the German duchess or prince, members of the ancient French nobility, strangers of rank and talent, literary characters, senators, and the poet and the philosopher mingling in the crowd. Here Mr. Fox met various remarkable men, and conversed with every one with

vivacity. The establishment of the Minister of Foreign Affairs was on the most liberal scale. He was allowed ten thousand a year to enable him to keep a handsome table and receive his guests in a manner worthy of the splendour of the rising government.

On the day of the levee there was a grand parade. Bonaparte, mounted on a white charger, accompanied by some general officers, reviewed his troops, amounting to about six thousand men, with great rapidity. Mr. Fox paid little or no attention to it, conversing chiefly, while it lasted, with Count Markhoff, the Russian ambassador. The account of the levee at which Mr. Fox was introduced to Bonaparte is interesting from the words addressed to him by the first consul; they are the prototype of many similar speeches uttered sixty years later by Napoleon the Third. We give the narrator's own words:

"On the occasion of the great levee which was to collect so many representatives of nations and noble strangers from every country to pay their respects to the first consul, several apartments, having the general name of 'Salle des Ambassadeurs,' were appropriated for the crowd of visitors at the levee previous to their being admitted to the first consul's presence. Lord Holland, Lord Robert Spencer, Lord St. John, Mr. Adair, and myself accompanied Mr. Fox there. The grand masquerade of human life was inexpressibly striking. A restrained expression was often to be caught on the countenances present, which seemed to say, 'Can this be reality? Can it last?' 'What think you of all this?' said the Chevalier d'Azara, ambassador from Spain, addressing himself to Mr. Fox, who made answer by a smile. 'It is an astonishing time,' he continued; 'pictures, statues—I hear the Venus de Medicis is on the way; what shall we see next?' A pleasant dialogue ensued between these two statesmen, diverting themselves, when scolding could avail nothing. The American minister, Mr. Livingston, was plain and simple in his manner and dress; Count Markhoff was covered with diamonds, and of a most forbidding aspect, with sound sense, however, malgré that face which no lady would fall in love with, and an ungraceful air; the King of Prussia's ambassador, the Marquis Lucchesini, gaudily dressed—like a foreign bird—but pleasing and easy of demeanour; the Neapolitan ambassador, the Marquis de Gallo, an unmeaning nobleman of the old school; and the venerable and sage negotiator, the Count Cobenzel, the Austrian ambassador, were there, with a great number of English noblemen and gentlemen who, with many Russian and Swedish officers, with the white scarf on their arm, crowded the rooms. There was a much greater number of English presented than of any other nation. The Cardinal Caprara represented his holiness the Pope, with his scarlet stockings and cap, a polite and dignified ecclesiastic. This grand assemblage was detained in the Salle des Ambassadeurs a considerable time, during which several ser-

vants in splendid lace liveries handed round coffee, chocolate, and the richest wines and cakes upon china bearing the initial B., without any armorial, royal, or established mark of rank. The heat was excessive, and expectation, wearied with the pause, began to droop, when the door opened, and the prefect du palais announced to the Cardinal Caprara that the first consul was ready; he afterwards called M. d'Azara, upon which every one followed without regular order or distinction of rank. We ascended the great staircase between files of musketeers!

"When we reached the inner apartment where Bonaparte, surrounded by his generals, ministers, senators, and officers, stood between the two other consuls, Le Brun and Cambacères, in the centre of a semicircle at the head of the room, the numerous assemblage from the Salle des Ambassadeurs formed into another semicircle, and joined themselves to that at the head of which stood the first consul. Bonaparte, of a small and by no means commanding figure, dressed plainly, though richly, in the embroidered consular coat, looked like a private gentleman indifferent to dress and devoid of all haughtiness in his air. The two other consuls, large, heavy men, seemed pillars too cumbrous to support themselves, and during the levee were sadly at a loss what to do—whether the snuff-box or the pocket-handkerchief was to be appealed to, or the left leg exchanged for the right. The moment the circle was formed Bonaparte began with the Spanish ambassador, then went to the American, with whom he spoke some time, and so on, performing his part with ease and very agreeably, until he came to the English ambassador, who, after the presentation of some English noblemen, announced Mr. Fox. Bonaparte seemed a good deal flurried, and said very rapidly, 'Ah! Mr. Fox, I have heard with pleasure of your arrival; I have desired much to see you; I have admired in you the orator and friend of his country, who in constantly raising his voice for peace consulted that country's best interests, those of Europe and of the human race. The two great nations require peace; they have nothing to fear; they ought to understand and value one another. In you, Mr. Fox, I see with much satisfaction that great statesman who recommended peace because there was no just object for war, who saw Europe desolated to no purpose, and who struggled for its relief.'

"Mr. Fox said little, or rather nothing. He had always the same invincible repugnance to acknowledge an address complimentary to himself. A few questions and replies relative to Mr. Fox's tour ended the interview."

Bonaparte is thus described:

"His (Bonaparte's) stature being small, and his person, though not ill, yet not very well formed, he cannot be supposed to have a very striking air on that account; but his countenance has a powerful expression, and decision and determination, when he is grave and thoughtful, are most emphatically marked on it.

His eyes are common grey, and have nothing remarkable in them. I am disposed to think that the lower part of the face, which is the most striking in that of Bonaparte, is the most apt to express a prompt and inexorable disposition. In performing the honours of the levee, this was not at all observable; on the contrary, his smile was extremely engaging, his general expression very pleasing, and his manners divested of all haughtiness without manifesting the least trace of that studied condescension, which, in persons of great rank, is often more offensive than arrogance or rudeness."

When the levee was over, a very pleasant party of English, invited by Lord Robert Spencer, dined at Robert's, the first restaurateur at Paris. Amongst others, Kemble was there. On the following day, Mr. and Mrs. Fox and some of their friends paid a visit to the celebrated Abbé Sièyes. He was living in retirement about twelve miles from Paris, cultivating estates (national domain) to a considerable extent, granted him by the new consular government as a remuneration for past services, an asylum for the future, and a proper retreat from all subsequent cares of government.

After the levee, Mr. Fox resumes his researches among the historical records with indefatigable zeal. He is surprised at finding how devoted to his religious opinions was Louis the Fourteenth; it is evident in all his letters to Barillon. Thus while he was bribing a monarch to trample down and debase his own subjects, he was also urging the restoration of the Catholic religion, whose precepts forbade the overthrow or any interference with established governments.

An account of a dinner at Talleyrand's we will give in the narrator's own words:

"Some time after the levee, we dined at M. Talleyrand's, at Neuilly. We went between six and seven, but did not dine till eight. The dinner-hour at Paris had become ridiculously late, and, as in London in fashionable life, resembled more the Roman supper than what accords with the modern term dinner. M. Talleyrand was at Malmaison transacting business with the first consul, and the dinner waited for him. He and madame sat at the sides of the table; the company, amounting to between thirty and forty (and this, I believe, did not exceed the ordinary daily number), were attended by almost as many servants without any livery. Behind Madame Talleyrand's chair two young blacks, splendidly habited in laced clothes, were placed. The master of the feast devoted himself to a few distinguished persons around him. On them he bestowed his most choice wines, and to them he directed all his conversation. Several émigrés and ex-nobles who had made their peace with the government, and were desirous of advancement, or sought relief or compensation under the new régime, were at the lower end of the table. They were little noticed, or, if I said altogether neglected, I should be more correct. The Duc d'Uzeza [cidévant], formerly one of the first as well as most

ancient peers of old France, was close to me. He was now a humble and distressed individual, divested of title and property, and seeking at the table of the minister of foreign affairs under the consular government for notice and assistance. He had come to Neuilly in a hired one-horse cabriolet without servant or companion. He was of a gentle, prepossessing, and rather youthful appearance, and seemed to bear his change of fortune with an admirable degree of philosophy and good humour, and was even playful upon his own situation, and spoke of the splendour and elevation of others without envy.

"Later, Madame Talleyrand's circle commenced. The corps diplomatique flowed in, and the minister for the rest of the evening transacted business with them, taking one aside at one time to one room, another to another. Madame Talleyrand maintained a good deal of state, and was attended, on entering the drawing-room, by two young females elegantly clothed in white, burning frankincense as she advanced. Mr. Fox alternately conversed or played cards. He, who in the retirement of St. Anne's Hill, appeared devoted to a rural and philosophic life, and never played after the payment of his debts by his party in 1793, was here the easy man of the world, conversing in their own languages with Frenchmen, Italians, and Spaniards, and admired by all as much for the amiability of his manners as he had long been for the splendour of his talents. The day after this dinner, and henceforth frequently, we dined at Neuilly. The drive home to Paris in these charming serene nights was not the least agreeable part of the excursion."

A drawing-room at Madame Bonaparte's seems to have been somewhat tedious. The ceremony was short, cold, and insipid. Madame, the disparity of whose age was ill-concealed by a great deal of rouge, sat at the head of the circle richly habited.

Bonaparte, after they had paid their compliments, came from an inner apartment, went round the circle, said a few words to the ladies, and retired. Mr. Fox stayed but a short time, having paid his compliments to madame. As she loved plants and understood botany, he found it agreeable to converse with her on this subject. She had enriched Malmaison by a very fine and choice collection of plants.

Lafayette pays a visit to Mr. Fox:

"One day, whilst transcribing and reading at the office of the Archives, a stranger, of interesting and graceful figure, entered the room. He advanced rapidly and embraced Mr. Fox with a countenance full of joy, while tears rolled down his cheeks. Mr. Fox testified equal emotion. It was M. de Lafayette. He had at a very early age visited London; they had become acquainted with one another, and they had not met again till now. Meanwhile, M. de Lafayette, born under a despotie régime, left all the luxuries and indulgences which privileged rank and fortune could afford to cross the Atlantic and offer his mite of aid to the Americans. He

built, at his own expense, a frigate, and by exertions, military and civil, contributed to the establishment of the United States; whilst his friend Mr. Fox in the English House of Commons laboured with equal zeal to obtain a peaceful acknowledgment of their claims. M. de Lafayette had come from the country to Paris to see Mr. Fox, and to invite him to his house. He lived about thirty miles from Paris, quite unconnected with and unconsulted by the government. Mr. Fox cheerfully agreed to visit him at La Grange."

Here is a pretty cabinet portrait of Madame Récamier:

"Madame Récamier gave a déjeuner at Clichy, to which Mr. Fox and party were invited, as also most of the distinguished persons at Paris. We went there about three o'clock. So much has been said of the beauty of the charming hostess that it would be idle to say more than that every one was captivated by it. But still more interesting than her beauty were her simple and unaffected manners, a genuine mildness and goodness of disposition obvious in all she said and did, with as little vanity as it is possible to conceive in a young woman so extravagantly admired. She received her visitors with singular ease and frankness. The house was pretty, with gardens extending to the river; in these the company walked till all were assembled. There for the first time we saw General Moreau. Mr. Fox addressed himself to him, and turned the conversation on Louis the Fourteenth; Moreau on this subject was dull, and did not give out one spark of intelligence. Afterwards, at table, he was free in his discourse about the army; but those who heard his conversation remarked that he manifested more want of thought than prudence in his manner of expressing himself. He was living in those days about ten or twelve miles from Paris, and was said to be much devoted to his wife and to hunting. Eugene Beauharnais, the viceroy of Italy, was also that day a guest of Madame Récamier."

Mr. Fox had become "a lion" at Paris. It was the fashion to ape Mr. Fox; his dress, his manner of speaking, his dinners, were imitated. It was the fashion to be a thinking man, and to think like Mr. Fox; the coxcombs did their best to model their features, or, at least, the expression of their countenances, upon his. At the opera he attracted every eye; he was followed as a sight through the streets; his portrait was in the window of every print-shop, and no medallions had such sale as those which bore the head of Mr. Fox. The artists alone felt dissatisfied, for he refused to sit for his picture.*

Madame Récamier one day called to take Mr. Fox out in her carriage; but he hesitated to accompany her. "Come," said the lady, with her bewitching smile, "I must keep my promise, and show you on the promenade. The

good people of Paris must always have their spectacle. Before you came, I was the fashion; it is a point of honour, therefore, that I should not appear jealous of you." So he consented.

An incident occurred at a visit by the first consul to the Louvre, which affords a fine subject for an historical painter. In one of the halls there was a very large and very handsome terrestrial globe, destined for the first consul, and very ingeniously constructed. One of the personages who accompanied Bonaparte, turning the globe, and putting his hand upon England, made the unhappy remark that "England occupied a very small space in the map of the world." "Yes," exclaimed Mr. Fox; "it is in that little island the English are born; it is in that little island they all wish to die; but," he added, extending his arms round the two oceans of the two Indies, "while they live, they fill the entire globe, and embrace it with their power." The first consul gave ready applause to this proud and well-timed sally.

Previous to leaving Paris for La Grange, Madame Cabarrus, ci-devant Tallien, gave a sumptuous dinner to Mr. Fox and other distinguished foreigners. Most of Mr. Fox's friends were at the dinner; but great was the surprise, and, indeed, displeasure of some English personages of political consequence, on finding that Mr. Arthur O'Connor (exiled for conspiracy) was one of the guests. Mr. Erskine was extremely uneasy lest some evil speaker should misrepresent the matter in England. Mr. Fox treated it as an unlucky incident which could not be avoided, and spoke to Mr. O'Connor just as usual.

On the 1st Vendémaire (September 23rd) another levee was held, at which Mr. Fox was present. The ceremony was similar to that already described. It was the custom to invite those once presented at a levee to dinner on the subsequent one. Accordingly, Mr. Fox on this occasion dined with the first consul. Bonaparte, he said, talked a great deal. Mr. Fox was much pleased. After the dinner, which was a short one, the first consul retired with a select number to Madame Bonaparte's apartments in the Tuileries, where the rest of the evening was spent. Mr. Fox appeared to consider Bonaparte as a young man who was a good deal intoxicated with his success and surprising elevation. He did not doubt of his sincerity as to the maintenance of peace, though Bonaparte manifested some irritation against a part of Mr. Pitt's ministry, as having instigated, or been privy to, plots against his life, particularly that of the infernal machine; he actually named Mr. Windham as one who had abetted it. Mr. Fox did everything in his power to disabuse the mind of the first consul of such an idea, so far as his own positive contradiction, or, at least, his conviction most strongly expressed, could go. Bonaparte spoke a good deal of the probability of doing away with all difference between the inhabitants of the two worlds, of blending the black with the white, and having universal peace.

* There are two portraits of Mr. Fox at the historical gallery at South Kensington.

Mr. Fox's impressions respecting his conversations with Bonaparte are best given in his own words. In a letter written to Lord (then Mr.) Grey in December, just after his return from Paris, he says :

"My notion about Bonaparte's politics is this, that when I first went to Paris, he was foolishly sore about our newspapers, but not ill-disposed to the ministers, and still less to the country. At this time he was out of humour with Austria, and determined, as I suspect, not to give way a tittle to her. Afterwards, when he suspected (whether truly or falsely) that we should interfere, he began to be terribly afraid of a war, which might in France be imputed to his rashness. In consequence of this fear, he did make concessions by no means inconsiderable to Austria, and immediately felt bitter against us, who were the cause of his making them. But as that bitterness (according to my hypothesis) arises principally from the fear he has of our driving him into an unpopular war, I do not think it will for the present prevent peace; nor, indeed, if pacific counsels and language are used here, that it is at all likely to be lasting. You may depend upon it that commerce, and especially colonial commerce, is now the principal object; and upon these subjects they have a stupid admiration of our systems of the worst kind, slave-trade, prohibitions, protecting duties, and so on. However, bad as these systems may be, France must in some degree recover her commerce, and the more she does the more will she be afraid of a war with England. But what signifies France? Bonaparte can do what pleases *him*, without consulting the nation. This is not true in any country beyond a certain extent, and I feel morally certain that Bonaparte and all his friends are of opinion that war with England is the only event that can put his power in peril. An army is a most powerful instrument of government; but, that it is not in all cases one upon which dependance can be placed is proved by the history of every country where very enormous armies are maintained; and out of the army he cannot expect the approbation of any one individual, if he engages in any war with us to which he is not actually driven. Whatever ridicule may be thrown upon the title of 'Pacificator,' you may be sure that whatever hold he has (perhaps no great matter neither) upon the people of France arises from the opinion that he and he alone could make the peace, and that he will be the best able to maintain it. Now, after I have said all this, I admit the justness of your apprehensions, that the hostile language and 'attitudes' (if one must use the new-fangled word) of the two nations may produce war against the wishes of the two governments; and to lessen that danger, as far as I shall at present meddle in politics, shall be my aim."

On the 24th of September, Mr. Fox and his party left Paris for La Grange, the residence of Lafayette.

"The château was of a very singular construction, quadrangular, and ornamented at each

angle by Moorish towers, which had no unpleasant effect. Near the mansion was a ruined chapel. We drove into the court-yard. The family came into the hall to meet us, and received Mr. and Mrs. Fox with the heartiest welcome. It consisted of two daughters, a son and his wife, all young, and living with M. de Lafayette, as their brother and friend, his age being at this time about forty-nine or fifty. His benevolent countenance, his frank warm manner, and a placid contentedness, had altogether an irresistible charm for every one, and made him quite adored in his family. Madame de Lafayette, of the ancient family of the Noailles, with the high polish of the old nobility, was eloquent and animated, and fondly attached to her husband and her family. It is well known that M. de Lafayette had been arrested on leaving France in 1793, and thrown into the dungeons of Olmütz. He had been imprisoned a considerable time when Madame de Lafayette, unable any longer to bear her separation from him, determined to make an effort for his liberty, or to share his captivity, and she set out with her young children for Germany, where, at the feet of the emperor, she implored his majesty to release her husband, or to allow her to share his confinement. Her first request was refused, but she was permitted to visit her husband. For several years from that time she never left him, herself and daughter undergoing with him every inconvenience and misery. The damp of his prison hurt her health, and she never quite recovered from its effect. Bonaparte—to his honour be it remembered—interposed as soon as he had power, and insisted on M. de Lafayette's liberation. Accordingly, at the period of which I write (1802), something more than ten years after his first imprisonment, M. de Lafayette had not long arrived in France. The château and estate of La Grange, which madame, who was an heiress, had brought him, was all that remained of his fortune; everything else he had lost in the madness of revolutionary confiscation, and had not yet been able to procure restitution or compensation.

"To add to the interest of this scene, General Fitzpatrick, who had known M. de Lafayette in America, and had in 1794 moved an address to the House of Commons to beg the king to intercede for M. de Lafayette's liberation from his German dungeon (which motion was rejected by one hundred and fifty-three against forty-six votes), joined the party at La Grange, and was received most affectionately by the family. Lally Tolendal, also, whose father had, under the old régime, suffered so severe a fate, was at La Grange—an open, honest, agreeable man, telling a great many anecdotes relating to the revolution. In the evening he read extracts from Shakespeare, translated by himself into French. A few of M. de Lafayette's country neighbours were occasionally invited; his table was plentiful, and our evenings were diversified by conversation and chess, or some other game, as was most agreeable. Madame was extremely pleasing in conversation, and narrated her ad-

ventures and sufferings in Germany with great vivacity and ease.

"The château itself was ancient and simply furnished, and the wood adjoining was divided, in the old style, by long green alleys intersecting one another. M. de Lafayette spoke a good deal about America. He said that so great was the jealousy of the Americans against foreign troops, that he was obliged to reduce the number stipulated for, though he afterwards negotiated for more at home, and made the aid effectual. M. de Lafayette was now devoted to agricultural pursuits, and had entirely withdrawn from political affairs. His house and family were excellently regulated; each one had his or her own employment; till dinner every guest was left quite free to read, to walk, and explore the country, to write—in short, to act as he pleased. All re-assembled at dinner. The garden, which was large, but had been neglected, occupied a good deal of the attention of M. de Lafayette, and he was in the mornings engaged on his farms. Mr. Fox was very happy at La Grange; everything there suited his tastes, besides the gratification of seeing his friend, after a life of danger and years of captivity, sheltered at length on that moderate estate with all his family round him."

The day after his return to Paris, Mr. Fox is invited to dinner at Berthier's, the minister of war. The entertainment was splendid and striking. Military trophies decorated the great staircase; the dining-room was adorned with busts of Dessaix, Hoche, and two other generals, deceased. A great many living distinguished military characters were present; Berthier himself, agreeable, active, and penetrating, seemed equally fit for war or the cabinet; Massena, about forty-five or forty-six years of age, with piercing small black eyes, strong make, determined air, and lively motion. Bourgainville, celebrated circumnavigator of the globe, and Volney, author of the *Ruins of Empires*, were at this dinner. The form of invitation was in accordance with the republican style, in date, in designation of the year, and in the title, "*République Française*," affixed to it. An Austrian officer in full regimentals, in the midst of the French officers at Berthier's, was an attractive sight, and one very agreeable fruit of peace.

In a letter to Lord Holland, dated 21st November, 1802, Mr. Fox says:

"I have seldom spent time pleasanter than in Paris, yet I never in my life felt such delight in returning home. '*Hic amor, hæc patria est*,' mind, I mean the *hic* and the *hæc* in a very confined sense. Indeed, I have little or nothing to tell you of my life in Paris; the sight of Lafayette and his family, and the perfect attachment of them all to him, and of him to them, was very charming. The only new acquaintances I made worth mentioning were Livingstone, who, though deaf, is far the most agreeable American I ever conversed with, besides being a very well informed and sensible man; and Berthier, with whom, from shooting

together, I became very intimate. . . . I do not reckon Lord Henry Petty, because I have been speaking of foreigners only, but never did I see a young man I liked half so much. Whatever disappointments Lansdowne may have had in public life, and in a still more sensible kind in Lord Wycombe (his eldest son), he must be very unreasonable if he does not consider them all compensated in Lord Henry."

This Lord Henry was the late Marquis of Lansdowne.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

COLONEL DESPARD'S PLOT.

IN 1779, Count d'Estaing threatened Jamaica with twenty-five sail and five-and-twenty thousand men. The French expedition proving a mere menace and ending in vapour, Governor Dalling, immediately on the disappearance of the hostile fleet below the horizon, planned an expedition against the Spanish colony of St. Juan, hoping to conquer Lake Nicaragua and the cities of Granada and Leon, and to cut off the communication of the Spaniards between their northern and southern American possessions. Lord George Germaine, secretary of state for the American department, approved the plan, more especially as great discontent against Spain was then prevailing in Peru. Nelson, a mere boy of a captain, just posted on board the *Hinchinbrooke* (twenty-eight guns), was ordered to convoy the five hundred men destined for this dangerous expedition from Port Royal to Cape Gracias à Dios, in Honduras.

Governor Dalling and his officers were entirely ignorant of the climate of Nicaragua, its dangers, and its geography. The fatal expedition began by starting too late in the season. All went well at first; the native tribes of the Mosquito shore came to the camp and promised boats for the St. Juan river. On reaching the mouth of the St. Juan, Nelson's services properly ceased, but finding none of the soldiers had ever been up the river, or knew any of the distances, he resolved to take them up himself and let his sailors help the Indians. Nelson, at this time, is described as a gaunt, strange-looking young man, dressed in stiff-laced uniform, and an old-fashioned waistcoat with deep flaps, his lank unpowdered hair being tied in a stiff Hessian tail of extraordinary length. With him and among the troops was Captain Despard, a handsome resolute Irish officer, with bold and fine features; a determined, impetuous, and intrepid man, who, in spite of his mild expression, was Nelson's right hand. By day, the sailors and Indians had to drag the boats, under a fiery sun, over shoals and glaring sandbanks; by night, to endure the pestilential miasma and the heavy and poisonous dews. At last they reached a fort upon an island, and Nelson and Despard stormed it at the head of some seamen. Then they arrived at the castle of St. Juan, sixty-nine miles from the mouth of the river, and, like the river itself, walled in by almost impassable woods swarming with

snakes. Nelson was for instant assault, but the soldiers, once more on terra firma, grew bold and pedantic, and insisted on a regular siege, although the rains had set in, and fever was fast mowing down the men. The untoward place was taken only in time to turn it into a hospital. For months our brave men bore the horrors of this place, till the few survivors were too weak even to bury the dead. Only three hundred and eighty men survived out of one thousand eight hundred. Eighty-seven of the Hinchinbrooke's crew took to their beds in one night, and of the whole crew only ten eventually survived. The men of the transports all died, and some of the ships, being left without sailors, sank in the harbour. Nelson never recovered the effects of this campaign, and returned to England the wreck of his former self, to be instantly sent out to the North Seas, as if the Admiralty, as he remarked, had actually resolved upon his death.

Edward Marcus Despard, the strenuous captain whom we have seen hauling at boats with Nelson over the burning white sand-banks of the detestable St. Juan river, and storming the fort at the head of the seamen of the Hinchinbrooke, was the cadet of an old and respectable family in Queen's County, and he had the warm heart and strong passions of his race. He was the youngest of six brothers, five of whom were in the army or the navy. He was born in 1750 or 1751, and in 1766 entered the army as an ensign in the 5th Regiment. He afterwards exchanged to the 79th, and rose by degrees from lieutenant to quartermaster, captain-lieutenant and captain. In all these posts he served with credit and distinction, and was noticed and rewarded by General Meadows and the Duke of Northumberland. For the last twenty years he had been detached from his own corps, and entrusted with offices peculiarly responsible, and requiring experience, courage, and sagacity. He was chief engineer in Nelson's expedition, and obtained great praise for his valour and endurance from his commander, Captain Polson. He was then employed to construct public works at Jamaica, and executed the task so well and so promptly that he received the thanks of the council and assembly of the island; he was appointed by the governor commander-in-chief of the island of Rattan and its dependencies; and on the Spanish Main and on the Mosquito shore he took rank as lieutenant-colonel and field engineer. A man evidently of an organising and independent mind, he now especially distinguished himself by leading the inhabitants of Cape Gracias à Dios against the Spaniards, and retaking from the Dons the important settlement of Black River. For this useful service Despard again received the thanks of the governor, council, and assembly of Jamaica, and, what was more, of King George himself. In 1783 he was made colonel, and in 1784 first commissioner for settling the boundary lines of the South American territory ceded to Britain by Spain. Profoundly versed in Central American affairs, and able to

handle the Mosquito Indians, Nicaraguans, and Spaniards with great tact, knowledge, and skill, Colonel Despard had fair reason to expect that he might some day become governor of Jamaica itself. He was soon appointed our Superintendent on the coast of Honduras, where the mahogany trade required watching, and he obtained many important commercial privileges for us from the crown of Spain. Factions, however, arose at Honduras, and Colonel Despard was accused by the opposition of various misdemeanours, probably rather the result of imprudence or pride than of any real criminality. Factions often send a colonial governor home in disgrace, if they can get rid of him in no other way.

The result, indeed, proved his entire innocence, for, after two years' importunity and miserable degradation in lobbies and ante-chambers (enough alone to craze anybody—how many madmen and suicides has it made?), an official inquiry was instituted with the usual sluggish formality and fuss, and the result was, that Colonel Despard was at last told by the ministers that there was no charge against him worthy of further investigation, that his Majesty had thought fit to abolish the office of superintendent at Honduras, or that he would have been reinstated in his post, but he was assured, *foi de ministre*, that his great services were not forgotten, and should in due time meet their reward. The real fact, probably, was, that the American department had delayed the business till all about it was forgotten; fresh men had arisen who had not been cognisant of poor Despard's courage, energy, and good sense, on whose minds was left some office tradition of somebody having done something wrong somewhere; and as it might have been Despard or some one of his officials, or some one else at Honduras whom nobody knew, they determined to shelve the importunate and troublesome colonel, whom no rebuff would drive from the Whitehall door. The Greeks always punished an unsuccessful general, and it has been generally a rule with English ministers to make a scapegoat of a blundering admiral, as Voltaire sardonically said of Byng, "*pour encourager les autres.*" It is even now observed that the Admiralty never give another vessel to a captain who has lost a man-of-war. Carelessness or misfortune, drunkenness or excess of caution, all one, he is thrown to the lions of public opinion. It may be a wise practice, but it is desperately cruel. We all know what Nelson suffered from the Admiralty of his day; its mean subterfuges, its idleness, its injustice. When he returned from the West Indies, broken in health, and was kept from mere malice (because he had been exposing speculations against government) five months at the Nore, and when his vessel was turned into a slop and receiving ship, he spoke of "the ungrateful service," and said, as he stepped from the Boreas on to the shore of the Medway, "It is my firm and unalterable determination never again to set my foot on board a king's ship."

He was always denouncing "the accursed system" of turning crews over from ship to ship, so that they could never become attached to the vessel or their officers. He was constantly battling against the dishonest delays of pay.

In 1801, there was great disaffection among the navy. When Admiral Mitchell's squadron was suddenly ordered from Bantry Bay to pursue the Brest fleet to the West Indies, the sailors mutinied; nor was the disaffection quelled until fourteen of the ringleaders swung from the yard-arm. The ideal liberty that the French had first attempted to hold up as a standard of the proper condition of man, so long the slave of bad kings and the beast of burden of brutal barons, was still producing discontent in men's minds wherever liberty was still imperfect. Secret political societies were busy in England, in the barrack and the fore-castle, the factory and the tavern, enrolling men who desired more freedom and an extension of political privileges. It was no longer possible to maintain the old boundaries, for the conditions had changed. The bulk of these agitators were honest and thoughtful foreseers of the future; but there were among them a few soured and disappointed persons, like ill-used Colonel Despard, who were impatient for swifter changes, and were for breaking in the doors that refused to open. We must have suffered as they had, before we can sufficiently know their feelings, or sufficiently pity their fate. Nature is slow, reasoned the cooler philosophers of their party; it took centuries before Egypt was formed by the alluvion of the Nile, or the coral island became Otaheiti. Yes, said the desperate men of progress, but nature works also through the lightning, the hurricane, the storm, the volcano, and the earthquake. Who shall say which works the better: the coral insect or the avalanche?

Gradually the neglected and injured soldier entered into the more dangerous and desperate schemes of the Reformers of 1801. His mind became absorbed by the one idea of his own wrongs and those of his country. He mixed with discontented men, who talked of nothing else. Persons of Despard's temperament soon persuade themselves that to avenge themselves is to avenge the wrongs of millions. The desperate conspirator always believes himself a martyr. Even infamous Fieschi thought himself a Curtius; and that broken card-sharper, Thistlewood, posed himself under the very noose, as a Mutius Scævola. Despard began to talk against the government in an unguarded way, at taverns, in the Park, and at meetings. He became conspicuous, and the Habeas Corpus being at that time suspended whenever there were fish in the river, he was soon snapped up, and lodged powerless, unheard, and without appeal, in Coldbath Fields, then a true Bastille, quite as dangerous to liberty as those black towers that once frowned over the Port St. Antoine. Despard went into Coldbath Fields a Louvet; he left it a Marat. His rancour turned to malignancy, his hatred to

frenzy. He was now not for agitation, but for assassination and revolt. He collected round him all the disaffected soldiers in town, and drew up a wild scheme to be instantly executed.

His two usual places of meeting were the Oakley Arms, Oakley-street, Lambeth, and the Flying Horse, Newington. On November 12, 1802, John Emblin, a watchmaker, was taken to the Queen's Arms, Vauxhall, by a soldier named Lander. The men present were members of one of the many societies which looked to Despard as their head. He was known to them to be a neglected and disgraced colonel, newly out of prison for high treason, and his rank, education, and desperate views rendered him perfectly fit for their purpose. The men then went on to the Flying Horse, in the Clapham-road, and there saw Despard, the leader, in disguise; some conspirators named Broughton, Windsor, and Smith, were drinking with him in a private room, and speaking of the form used at the Tower in passing the keys. Colonel Despard said the country was ready; the attack was to be made in the country and London on the same day; the stage and the mail-coaches were to be stopped. Colonel Despard also said that the whole of the royal family must be secured, and that, if necessary, he would attack the king with his own hand. It was then agreed that the Bank should be seized and the Tower taken. Windsor said with one hundred men he would take the Tower himself. The colonel said the arms at the Bank—six hundred—had been rendered useless by taking some part off. Lander afterwards remarked it would be prudent to have a division march from the Tower to New-street, Bishopsgate-street, to secure the arms of the East India Company; to go from thence to the Artillery Ground, where they would get more arms, and secure the pieces of artillery; then to march forward and assist at the attack upon St. James's. The colonel, on another day, objected to Lander's plan, but spoke of taking the Bank and Tower, and destroying the telegraph; he also thought that St. Paul's would be a good place for a garrison. It was resolved to raise companies of ten men, with an eleventh to take the command as captain. The oldest captain of five companies was to take the command of these fifty men, and was to be called colonel of that sub-division. There were divisions ready in the Borough, Blackwall, Marylebone, Spitalfields, and Whitechapel. This being settled, Colonel Despard said: "A regular organisation was necessary; people were everywhere ripe, particularly in Leeds, Sheffield, Birmingham, and all the large towns." The attack was to be made when his Majesty went to the Parliament House. "His Majesty must be put to death. I have weighed the matter well, and my heart is callous."

There were cards printed with a form of oath, and these were read over and kissed by all new proselytes, who then took copies to distribute. The following was the oath:

"CONSTITUTION.

"The independence of Great Britain and Ireland. An equalisation of civil, political, and religious rights. An ample provision for the families of the heroes who shall fall in the contest. A liberal reward for distinguished merit. These are the objects for which we contend; and to obtain these objects we swear to be united. In the awful presence of Almighty God, I, A. B., do voluntarily declare that I will endeavour, to the utmost of my power, to obtain the objects of this union; namely, to recover those rights which the Supreme Being, in His infinite bounty, has given to all men; that neither hopes nor fears, rewards nor punishments, shall ever induce me to give any information, directly or indirectly, concerning the business, or of any member of this or any similar society. So help me God."

Wood, a soldier, and one of the most desperate of the gang, had proposed a wild scheme. On the north side of the parade, in St. James's Park, there still stands, flanking the Treasury, a long Egyptian gun, taken by us at Alexandria. We have most of us carelessly passed it a thousand times in the sun and rain. Wood proposed to secretly load this gun, adjust it, then get himself placed sentinel over it on the day when parliament was opened, and fire it at the king's coach. To use the very words, afterwards sworn to at the trial, this desperate man said at the Oakley Arms, openly before his comrades, and with their approval: "I will post myself sentry over the great gun in the park, and load it, and fire at his Majesty's carriage as it passes in going to the House." Wood was a soldier, and in the course of his duty might sometimes be sentinel at that gun. He also spoke of the Mall, between the private gate of his Majesty and Buckingham House, as being the most proper place in which to attack the king, because there would be no Horse Guards there when his Majesty came out of his private gate, after levee-day, to go to Buckingham House.

Broughton then drew aside Emblin, the new comer, and said, "My boy, we have the completest plan in the world, which will do the business without any trouble. It is to load the great gun in the Park with four balls, or chain-shot, and fire it at his Majesty as he returns from the House." Then, with a kind of sneer, he said, "He would be d—d if that did not send them to h—."

Emblin, unaccustomed to blood, replied, "Good God! do you consider how many people will be in the Park that day, and how many lives you will take away?" Wood said, "Let them get out of the way; it will play h— with the houses at the Treasury and round about there." Some other soldier then observed, "The cannon might be too low;" another said, "It might be easily raised an inch;" and a third man remarked, "But if it misses his Majesty?" Broughton replied, "Then, d—n him, we must man-handle him."

All the rough men assembled in the smoking-

room of the suburban tavern round the grim disguised leader, applauded the scheme, and agreed that it must be done before the *man-eaters* (parliament) met. At the Coach and Horses, Whitechapel, and the Tyger, on Tower Hill, other meetings were held; and it was decided by Despard first to kill the king, then attack the Parliament House and the Tower. The colonel was generally spoken of among the other conspirators by the playful synonym of "the nice man." The men were desperate, the plot was ripe, parliament was soon to meet, and the gun on the parade was ready for the chain-shot.

On the 16th of November, 1802, the conspirators met in an upper room of the Oakley Arms, in an obscure part of that dim damp brick-kiln region of Lambeth. There were about thirty soldiers and Irishmen of the humblest class in the room, surrounding a stern-faced thick-set man in shabby clothes, and with a plaid cotton handkerchief wound round his neck.

Their clamorous talk is about cutting telegraphs, attacking the Tower and India House, and blowing the King to perdition. Wood is earnest about putting plenty of balls in the gun on the parade, and the plan of attack on the coach, if the desperate shot failed, is arranged. Suddenly a diabolical fury seems to seize Colonel Despard. He leaps from his chair, eager at once to fall on his persecutors with the sword. He shouts "One and all!" and the thirty men push for the door; but a cluster of rough armed men stop them there, and leap in among them. It is the patrol. There is a scuffle with the colonel about searching him, and on him, when searched, nothing is found; there is a great calling of coaches, and forcing refractory men in; and then twelve of Despard's men are driven to the Tothill-fields Bridewell, and twenty to the new prison at Clerkenwell. Ten other persons, trapped in another room, and proved to have no connexion with the colonel's party, were at once discharged. The colonel remained obstinately silent.

The king's evidence was a spy named Windsor, a private in the Grenadier Guards (First Battalion). He had been drawn in by Francis, who swore him in at a meeting at a public-house in St. Giles's. Francis informed Mr. Bowmas, an army agent, who had given him directions what to do.

The privy council instantly issued a special commission, composed of four judges, which was opened at the new court-house, at Horse-monger-lane, Southwark, January 20, 1803.

The commissioners were Lord Chief Justice Ellenborough, lord president; Sir Alexander Thomson, Sir Simon Le Blanc, Sir Alan Chambre, Sir John William Rose, Serjeants Remington, Bailey, and Onslow.

Lord Ellenborough delivered his charge on the 21st to the grand jury. The same day the jury returned a true bill for high treason against Edward Marcus Despard, John Wood, Thomas Broughton, John Francis, Thomas Phillips, Thomas Newman, Daniel Tyndall, John Doyle,

James Sedgwick Wratten, William Lander, Arthur Graham, Samuel Smith, and John Macnamara.

At the request of the prisoner Despard, Mr. Serjeant Best and Mr. Gurney were assigned his counsel.

All the prisoners pleaded Not Guilty. Mr. Jekyll and Mr. Hovell were assigned counsel to all the prisoners except Despard.

The counsel for the crown were Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. Serjeant Shepherd, Mr. Plumer, Mr. Garrow, Mr. Common Serjeant, Messrs. Wood, Fielding, and Abbott; solicitor, Joseph White, Esq.

Macnamara was an Irish carpenter; Graham, a slater; Wratten, a shoemaker; Broughton, a carpenter; Wood and Francis were soldiers. It was the old cruel story of those unhappy times. A reckless conspiracy, fomented by spies until it was ripe, and then crushed by a stupid but firm minister. It was spies who had urged on all the treasonable conversation.

Mr. Serjeant Best made a brave fight of it for poor Despard, contending that there was no proof of his sharing in the attempt to seduce the army from its allegiance. "It is a rule," he said, "of law upon the subject of treason, that the crime cannot be made out by *mere words*, but must be evidenced by *acts, deeds, or writings*. I mean to say that it is not upon the parole testimony of witnesses only that a man is to be convicted. But it may be said there is a printed paper found in this case. I do not care whether that paper be treasonable or not, *is it connected with Colonel Despard, except by the testimony of Francis, one of the most infamous men alive?* According to the evidence, the traitorous scheme was on the eve of being carried into execution. The Tower was to be seized on the 6th of September, and yet *no evidence* is offered to show why this important step was *not* carried out. Gentlemen, there were no *deeds* of preparation; there are no *writings*, the possession or knowledge of which is brought home to Colonel Despard.

"It is a rule of evidence that the case shall be made out by credible witnesses. I say accomplices may be called, but their evidence ought not to be regarded unless a complete crime is proved by *other* witnesses; that is, their evidence may be used to corroborate the evidence of other and credible witnesses. Ask yourselves whether one tittle of evidence to affect the gentleman who now stands before you has been proved in this case, except by the evidence of accomplices. Unless his being present at the meeting at the Oakley Arms is sufficient to prove he is guilty, there is no other circumstance but what comes from accomplices. It may be said that though the testimony of one of the four—Windsor, Francis, Blades, and Emblin—would be insufficient, yet the concurrent testimony of the four is sufficient. But, gentlemen, if men conspire to fasten a crime about the neck of others, they will take care that all their stories agree. Show there is ground to presume they have concerted

together for the purpose of charging an offence against Colonel Despard which belongs wholly to themselves, and there is an end of all their evidence. In the sequel of what I have to say, I think I shall prove that such a conspiracy does exist in this case.

"The account given by them is improbable. Fourteen or fifteen persons assemble at a common tap-house, with no arms but tobacco-pipes, and form a conspiracy to overturn a government supported by the loyalty of millions. The men who have undertaken to do this are of the lowest order in society; they have no foreign connexion, and they have the enormous sum of fifteen shillings and sixpence in the treasury. You have no evidence of even forty men being ready at one period; yet the Tower was to be taken, the mail-coaches stopped, the Bank seized, and the king attacked while surrounded by the Horse Guards. Is it likely that Colonel Despard should have said he would break through the Horse and Foot Guards and do it with his own hand? I think I have demonstrated that a more improbable scheme never existed. I am persuaded a traitorous scheme did exist, that some men conceived the design of seducing the army from their allegiance to the king, but, finding the integrity of the soldiers an insurmountable barrier, they felt they must devise some means of securing themselves from the consequences of their crime. There was but one way—and Windsor pointed out what that was—to secure himself by charging others. After telling Mr. Bownas he was weary of the treason, yet still to attend the meetings, still to do what only the most infamous man could do; although he *knew* the consequences, although he pretended to repent, to seduce other persons into it for the purpose of betraying them. What had these persons to do then? That which Windsor did. And yet it is on the testimony of such men as Windsor and the others that you are to say this gentleman, whom I will prove to be a man of character, and whom you must presume innocent till proved guilty, is guilty of a crime.

"The circumstance of Colonel Despard being degraded from his rank as colonel after serving his country abroad, was well known—he was known to be an injured man. This made the conspirators look upon him as a man upon whose shoulders the treason could be conveniently thrown. He was invited to their meetings, they representing themselves as injured soldiers. And he was induced by sympathy to attend these meetings. It does not follow that he was therefore a traitor; every person who attended was not a traitor; thirty were taken, fifteen discharged. Although he was suspected of treason in 1798, and detained in prison three years, yet, as he was discharged, I have a right to presume he was wholly innocent."

The witnesses to Despard's character were of the highest distinction. Lord Nelson had not seen him since 1780, but he then considered him an ornament to the army, a loyal man, and a brave officer. Sir Alured Clarke had known

him thirty years, always considered him a loyal subject and a zealous officer. Sir Evan Nepean, who had known the prisoner since he was under suspicion, said the testimonials he had brought from Jamaica were of the highest order.

Lord Ellenborough summed up—mercilessly, as might have been expected—and defended the credibility of the witnesses. He (Despard) had compassed the death of the king, which was treason by the statute of Edward the Third; and he had also compassed to seize the king's person, and conspired to depose him, which was treason by a recent statute. The jury, after twenty-five minutes' consultation, returned a verdict of guilty against Despard and nine other prisoners. Despard was recommended to mercy on account of his former good character, and the services he had rendered to his country.

Colonel Despard, when allowed to speak, expressed his satisfaction with his counsel, denounced the witnesses, and denied that he had ever seduced them from their allegiance, or even had the smallest conversation with them on the subject. Lord Ellenborough, in passing sentence, referred to the wild system of anarchy and bloodshed planned by the conspirators, who had promised to make ample provision for the families "of those heroes who should fall in the struggle." He then delivered the sentence: "That they be taken back to the prison, conveyed from thence to the place of execution on hurdles, there to be hanged, but not till they be dead, but that while still alive their bodies be taken down, their entrails taken out and burnt before their eyes, their heads severed from their bodies, and their bodies to be quartered, the heads and quarters to be at the king's disposal." Colonel Despard and the other prisoners appeared much less affected than the spectators.

In prison, Despard and his companions behaved with resignation and fortitude. Lord Nelson's mediation for his old comrade was in vain. The parting between Despard and his wife was borne by both with dignified fortitude, and she waved her handkerchief to him as the coach was driven from the prison. That was at three; at five she came again for a second and last farewell and was refused admittance, the turnkey wishing to spare the prisoner any further pain. Mrs. Despard expressed her indignation at this cruelty, and declared her firm devotion to the cause for which her husband was about to suffer. From three to half-past six, Colonel Despard paced his cell in agitation, then threw himself jaded on his pallet, and slept for an hour and a half. When he awoke, he exclaimed, in an excited way, to the jailer who was there on guard:

"From me they shall receive no information. From me? No, not for all the gifts, the gold, and jewels of the crown!"

He then composed himself and became silent. He refused to attend service at the chapel on Sunday; did not receive the sacrament; and declined the assistance of a clergyman, saying that he understood very well what he was

about, and that such interference would only perplex him the more. When his solicitor came that evening, the colonel told him he wished to be buried with his countrymen at Pancras. At daylight that morning, the drop, scaffold, and gallows, had been erected on the top of the jail, and great crowds had assembled to see the sight. The Bow-street patrol and detachments of the Guards were stationed round the jail day and night, for the ministry was still very uncertain how deeply it was detested.

The prisoners all slept about two hours, and, except their leader, spent the rest of their time with their priest and their dissenting ministers, preparing for death. Before daybreak, seven coffins, two large bags of sawdust, and the executioner's block, arrived at the prison. At four o'clock on Monday, February 21, the drum beat at the Horse Guards for the cavalry to assemble; soon afterwards, crowds began to fill the Westminster-road and all the approaches to Horse-monger-lane. At five, the bell of St. George's commenced tolling. At six, Lord Cathcart arrived at the head of the Life Guards; troops were stationed at the Obelisk, the Borough-road, and the Elephant and Castle; other troops patrolled the various adjacent streets. The officers, runners, and petty constables, were formed two deep in front of the prison, leaving a space of twenty yards from the walls unoccupied.

At half-past six the prison bell rang, and the cells were instantly unlocked. Five of the prisoners attended prayers, four confessed they had done wrong, but not to the extent of the evidence, and all said they were never happier in their lives. Despard and Macnamara then had their irons knocked off and their arms and hands bound. The sheriff kindly asked the colonel if he could render him any last service. The colonel thanked him in a gentleman-like way, but replied that he could not. He had previously dressed with composure, and drank two glasses of wine. He was well clad, in a blue double-breasted coat with gilt buttons, a cream-coloured waistcoat with narrow gold lace binding, and a flannel inside vest with scarlet top turned over—a fashion still seen among elderly country gentlemen only a few years back. He also wore grey breeches, top-boots, and a brown surtout. Before he was bound, he shook hands cordially with his solicitor, and returned him many thanks for his kind zeal and attention.

On hearing the clink and fall of the colonel's irons, the five prisoners in the chapel rose from their knees, and their arms and hands also were bound. The sledge—the body of a small cart, lined with straw, and drawn by two horses—was now ready, and the sheriff was summoned. When Despard saw the sledge, he smiled, and said contemptuously: "Ha! ha! What nonsensical mummery is this!" He then retired to the back and motioned to Francis, who had made way for him to go first. A regiment of cavalry were drawn up in Kent-street, and several companies of

foot soldiers were placed between the King's Bench and Blackman-street. The Bow-street officers were in two ranks from the inner prison gate to the keeper's house, and the procession passed between them. There were fifty Bow-street runners on the scaffold. The roofs of the neighbouring houses were crowded, as well as the adjoining windows and fields. The ghastly procession commenced exactly at half-past eight. The sledge bore two prisoners at a time. First, Macnamara and Graham; then, Wratten and Broughton; then, Wood and Francis—all composed, and most of them smiling.

Colonel Despard came last and alone. He looked well, and stepped into the cart with quiet indifference. On either side of him sat executioners with naked cutlasses. The bell then began to toll. The seven coffins were placed side by side on the coffin near the ominous sack of sawdust. One by one the prisoners ascended, and had each his cord fastened round his neck. Macnamara, who had been recently married, bowed to the sympathising people, and then prayed aloud. Graham looked pale and ghastly, and was silent. Wratten came up firm. Broughton smiled as he ran gaily up the stairs; but when the rope was put on, he smiled no more, but turned pale, and prayed earnestly. Francis, a tall, handsome fellow, was perfectly composed.

Colonel Despard ascended the scaffold with great firmness; his countenance underwent not the slightest change while the awful ceremony of fastening the rope round his neck, and placing the cap on his head, was performing. He even assisted the executioner in adjusting the rope, and was very particular in placing the noose under his left ear. He looked at the multitude assembled with perfect calmness. The clergyman, who ascended the scaffold after the prisoners were tied up, spoke to him a few words as he passed; the colonel bowed, and thanked him. The ceremony of fastening up the prisoners being finished, the colonel advanced as near as he could to the edge of the scaffold, and made the following speech to the multitude:

"Fellow Citizens,

"I come here, as you see, after having served my country—faithfully, honourably, and usefully served it—for thirty years and upwards, to suffer death upon a scaffold for a crime of which I protest I am not guilty. I solemnly declare that I am no more guilty of it than any of you who may be now hearing me. But though his Majesty's ministers know as well as I do that I am not guilty, yet they avail themselves of a legal pretext to destroy a man, because he has been a friend to truth, to liberty, and justice——" [There was a considerable huzza from part of the populace the nearest to him, but who, from the height of the scaffold from the ground, could not, for a certainty, distinctly hear what was said. The colonel proceeded.]—"because he has been a friend to the poor and distressed. But, citizens, I hope and trust, not-

withstanding my fate, and the fate of those who no doubt will soon follow me, that the principles of freedom, of humanity, and of justice, will finally triumph over falsehood, tyranny, and delusion, and every principle hostile to the interests of the human race. And now, having said this, I have little more to add——" [The colonel's voice seemed to falter here. He paused a moment as if he had meant to say something more, but had forgotten it.] He then concluded in the following manner:—"I have little more to add, except to wish you all health, happiness, and freedom, which I have endeavoured, as far as was in my power, to procure for you, and for mankind in general."

The colonel spoke in a firm and audible tone of voice, but left off sooner than was expected. There was no public expression, either of approbation or disapprobation, when he had concluded his address.

As soon as the colonel had ceased speaking, the clergyman prayed with five of the prisoners. Macnamara talked earnestly with the clergyman of his own persuasion. Despard surveyed the populace, and made a short answer, which was not distinctly heard, to some few words addressed to him by Francis, who was next him. The clergyman now shook hands with each of them. Colonel Despard bowed, and seemed to thank him as he shook hands with him.

The caps were then drawn, and some of the prisoners uttered a last prayer. At seven minutes before nine, the platform dropped, and seven dead men swung in the air. The colonel opened and clenched his hands twice; that was all. The rest died instantly, all but Broughton and Francis, who struggled for a few moments until the executioners pulled their legs.

In about half an hour the seven bodies were cut down, Colonel Despard's first. The bodies were then one by one partly stripped, placed upon sawdust, and the heads severed upon the block by surgeons engaged for the purpose. An executioner then lifted each head by the hair, and carrying it alternately to the right and left parapet, shouted to the people:

"This is the head of a traitor!" and so on, head after head. There was some hooting and hissing during the performance of this brutal mediæval ceremony, more especially when Despard's head was exhibited. The bodies were then placed in the shells, and delivered to friends for interment. The people took off their hats when the bleeding heads were raised up, but there was no disturbance. Many people fainted in the crowd. The government, apprehending a riot, had sent rockets to the governor of the prison to signal for more troops if more should be required.

The body of Colonel Despard, having lain at Mount-row, opposite the Asylum, was taken away on the 1st of March, by his friends, with a hearse and three mourning coaches, and interred near the north door of St. Paul's Cathedral, St. Paul's-churchyard. The crowd

was great; but when the grave was covered in, the people immediately and quietly dispersed. The City marshal was present, lest there should be any disturbance on the occasion.

The remains of the other six were deposited in one grave, in the vault under the Reverend Mr. Harper's chapel, in the London-road, St. George's-fields.

A DAY ON THE DEEP SEA.

I DON'T think deep-sea fishing is open to the old sneer about a line with a worm at one end and a fool at the other. In the first place, a worm is rarely used at one end; and in the next, when it comes to hauling in a big fish of sixty pounds or so, that will pull like a baker, fight like a man, and bark like a dog, something better than a fool is needed at the other end.

The day's fishing alluded to in my title I enjoyed (*sic*) during a visit to Guernsey in the autumn of last year. Considering what capital sport sea-fishing really is, and the facilities afforded for its practice by our coasts, it is a subject of surprise that a pastime so readily accessible should be so generally ignored.

Down at "Point," I found out an old fisherman, and made known my desire to accompany him on his next turn. The Guernsey peasantry and labourers, with scarcely an exception, possess a native gentleness and ease of manner that go far to corroborate their claim as descendants of Huguenot refugees of high birth. Most of them speak good English, with a very pretty accent, as well as a somewhat unintelligible patois of Norman-French. Guernsey folk have a much neater way of getting you to repeat a request than an abrupt British "Eh?" or "What?" or the still more unceremonious "What say?"

"What do you please?" asked the old man, not quite understanding my proposition.

I told him I "pleased" fishing, not delicate fine-weather sport, but a genuine experience of real rough fisherman's fishing. It took a vast amount of persuasion to induce old Pierre Jacques to allow me to go with him. There "weren't much fish," 'twas "a bad tide," "too much sea on," "didn't know if he should go out to-day," or if he did "where he should get bait," and so on. In point of fact, there *was* a deal of "sea on" at the time, and being not a little doubtful of my own ability to stand such a quantity, perhaps I should have been less anxious to press the matter but for feeling a little piqued at the old man's reluctance to go. He gave way at last, however (almost to my chagrin, I own, for there certainly *was* a deal of "sea on"), and trotted off with me to the quay to get some bait. Detaching one from many small egg-shaped wicker baskets I saw moored to stakes in the water, he opened it and showed me the bait—writhing, glancing little sand-eels, of the sort known as "sand-launce," which glistened

like silver and purple in the water. Making the basket fast to the stern of a boat, old Pierre bade me step in, and rowed off to his fishing smack, a large, wide, flat-bottomed craft, drawing scarce a foot of water, built very strong and stiff to withstand heavy seas, and carrying two little sails, with peaks, schooner-wise, but without fore-sheet or jib.

On board we found the old man's "boy," "young Pierre," as he called him—a bronzed, stalwart child indeed, tall, and broad-chested and forty, if a day. Their first care was to make me into a waterproof parcel by wrapping me up in oil-cloths and canvas, and neatly tying me round and across with twine, explaining as they did so that they "expected it wetfish." Next, each of the two fishermen went down into an enormous pair of leggings, which came up and tied round their necks with a string, like a long two-legged bag having arm-holes. A great slouchy oilskin coat, with a high collar that fitted in under their canvas hats, completed their armour.

Would I steer? Wouldn't I? I caught at the chance, for, rough as it was, even a tiller was something to hold on by. Well, our course was a mile out, by those rocks; I should see a buoy there—that was their buoy, and there was their "trot"—all I had to do was to make for the buoy, and "keep her to the wind." That was all very well, but it seemed as though we should never keep the craft to the water, she had such an unaccountable propensity for mounting up skywards, and trying to leap right out of the sea, then rushing down into a wave, and hurtling over on to the next one, much as a young bird trying to fly. However, I endeavoured to put a good face on it, and asked the men if they would have some tobacco.

"Please?" inquired old Pierre, interrogatively, meaning, as I found, "what did I please?" and not "thank you." I therefore repeated my offer, somewhat rashly adding that, for my own part, I required a pretty constant supply of the weed. "No, please," they didn't smoke; and if I intended to do so, I had better be quick about it. The same idea occurred to me simultaneously, for we were pitching about at such a wild rate I could not predicate with any degree of certainty that a few minutes more would find me in the same mind.

"Keep her up to it, sir," said the fishermen, encouragingly. She was already so much "up to it," that the water came splashing in sheets over us all, nearly blinding me as to where we were going; she was so much "up to it," that I could seldom see anything ahead of us but some great crested hill of glistening water, up which our boat was always going to climb, or poised for a moment on its top before darting down with a swash and a hiss into the seething valley below. She was so much "up to it," in fact, that when the first wave that washed over us had put out my pipe, nearly washing it down my throat into the bargain, I let it go without a pang.

"Hi, now sir, steady! Here we are. Sharp

up to the wind when I say now—now!" As I put up the helm, young Pierre grappled the buoy, and the old man struck the masts, leaving us tossing about with one end of the "trot" across our bows. The "trot" or "bolter," as it is sometimes called, is a strong line, a rope indeed, some three hundred yards long, from which depend four or five hundred hooks, snooded on strong water-cord or wired strands at regular intervals of about two feet. It is buoyed across the run of the tide, secured in its place by a grapnel, and floated by large corks, which dot out its track in the sea. In this position it becomes like a long row of baited meat-hooks, on which the fish come and hang themselves up. We commenced what is called "under-running the trot," that is to say, hauling the "trot" over our boat, taking off the fish, and fresh baiting the hooks with offal and pieces of mackerel and shad.

We had a pretty good haul, for there were a John Dory, two or three fine turbot, numbers of brill, and several great gaping skate of twenty pounds and more apiece, besides mackerel, and pollack, and smaller fry. The two first-named sorts and some of the largest brill are what the fishermen term "royal fish." Nearly all of them find their way to the London market, which depends in a great measure for its supply on Guernsey and the other Channel Islands. These great flat fish are not easily unhooked by a novice, having great strength in their tails, wherewith they can give the unwary a very severe blow. The skate especially is a very ugly customer to deal with in more senses than one, for it is the most hideous fish that swims. However, our fishermen put one hand into their great gills, throwing them one by one into a kind of tank that is "forrard," in a very matter-of-fact sort of way, occasionally administering a blow with an iron pin to some fish more unruly than the rest. Having baited and laid down our "trot" again (I may mention it is an offence punishable with transportation to haul another person's "trot"), we step our masts and set sail for more active fishing, in which we meditate hooking the fish, instead of leaving it to them to hook themselves.

Our fishing-ground is thirteen miles off, right at the back of the island, so we have a long run before us. We go down with the tide, keeping well out from land, since the island is so rocky it is dangerous to coast it when there is much "sea." We fish at low water and about two hours into the "young flood" (these being the universal sea-fishing hours), and come back again at night with the turn of the tide.

During a three hours' sail, tacking down against the wind, my whole energies were devoted to holding on, to prevent, on the one hand, being pitched head first into the fish-tank "forrard," and, on the other, so to manage to dodge the waves that broke over us, as to avoid being washed over the stern. Now and then, I believe, I made a sickly attempt to smile, but so palpably artificial was the effort, that on every such occasion old Pierre would

ask if I didn't feel well. I kept on assuring him I was quite well in so marked a manner that he invariably recommended me to try and nibble a biscuit and take a drop of brandy. It being utterly impossible to act upon his advice, since when I opened my mouth a wave was sure to fill it, carrying biscuit and brandy to the fishes, I gave up the attempt in despair, and framed some utterly transparent excuse (but which I thought wholly inscrutable at the time) for abandoning the helm. I then took to contemplating the sky, doubtless with a very fixed expression of countenance, until I became so giddy I could not tell which was sky and which was sea, for the billowy clouds were heaving and rolling like the water. Fully aware of feeling very particularly unwell, I was actually debating in my mind about offering the men a handsome consideration to toss me overboard, when a violent lurch of the boat hurled me right across into old Pierre's lap. With consummate coolness, the old fellow merely inquired, "What did I please?"

The exclamation "Oh!" is a word peculiarly adapted to sufferers, because, though a short one, you may yet make a great deal of it by sighing it out in a helplessly lugubrious drawl, as I believe I did. What I am afraid I meant by it at the time was, "Oh! fisherman, fisherman!—take all the ready money about my person, only take me up quick, and put me ashore." I think he must have so understood it, for he replied:

"Bear up, sir—it is all right; we have reached our fishing-ground, and there's a capital tide. Bring her to, my son," this to Pierre junior (the vessel he meant, not me; I was beyond "bringing to" at the time, and nearer "bringing up"). "Look out for our marks—Pleinmont Cave and the white house in a line, one mile out. So, let go the anchor!"

I listened in a most uncomfortable kind of trance, my deliberate opinion being at the moment that all the fish in the sea were worth nothing in comparison to the blessedness of setting foot once more on dry land. I remember they scuffled about a good bit in getting the sails down, and I was vaguely conscious of the grating noise the anchor chain made in running out. Then we were left tossing on a heaving ground swell, up and down, lurch, down, roll, up, lurch. When we went down, the boat seemed to sink away from underneath, falling quicker than I did, and always in the opposite direction to that for which I was prepared, dodging all my efforts to accommodate myself to its motion. Our craft had "heaved to and reached." So had I, and forthwith commenced throwing myself overboard by instalments. Oh! my brothers and sisters who know what it is to be sea-sick, paradox it may seem to others, not so to you, you are all very well so long as you can be ill; it is when you *can't* you are truly and deplorably bad. The study of anatomy teaches that the human heart and the human liver are intimately connected with the human larynx by certain cords and membranes.

You may learn the same truth from sea-sickness in half the time, and in a more convincing manner, realising experimentally and beyond doubt that your heart and your liver *have* strings to them and get pulled into your throat, and go up and down like the boat, only always going down when the boat goes up, and coming up when it goes down. Then you begin to feel the truth of the proverb, "Hope comes to all except the lost and the sea-sick."

I was roused from a painful lethargy by the sound of something whizzing and spinning in the boat. It was a snipe-billed gore-fish, dancing and pirouetting, and entangling the fisherman's line—the first fish. To my sickly notion, it looked ill and giddy, as I was—it did me good to see any living thing in the same plight—and when Pierre senior put three lines into my hands, my fingers certainly closed on them, though in a helpless kind of way. I noticed, even then, they were horsehair lines, nearly a quarter of an inch in diameter, beautifully plaited like a hair watch-guard, loaded at every yard, and baited with sand-launce. I believe Pierre explained they were weighted with lead sinkers of from six to eighteen pounds apiece, to counteract the strength of the tide, and to remain at different depths, the lightest almost floating. When he brought me a stout cord in addition, the thickness of flag halliards, having a large meat-hook at the end baited with slices of mackerel, and balanced with thirty pounds of lead for bottom fishing, and whispered in my ear the magic word "conger!" I certainly felt better; the prospect of the excitement of getting a good conger "on" almost giving me an appetite on the spot.

The first good tug at my horsehair lines acted on me like a strong tonic, and I was surprised how soon I forgot all the ailments of the sea in the busy employment of hauling home dancing gore-fish, and mackerel weighing three or four pounds, and whiting pollack of eight and ten, as fast as ever I could get them into the boat, bait my hooks with fresh eels, and get the lines out again. We were all three fishing, and in the course of an hour I should judge we had upwards of forty fine fish of different sorts, which is rather more rapid sport than the freshwater fisherman experiences, whilst most of the fish fight quite as gamely as trout. The excitement, by this time, made me disregard all the pitching of the boat or the drenchings from occasional waves. Then came a tug at the conger line, like a strong ringer pulling a bell. Dropping all the others, I held on with both hands.

"Give him line, sir," said Pierre; "let him run, but mind he has no slack; steady!" he cried, as he saw the cord run through my fingers so fast that it made them burn and tingle again. "Steady! he's too good a fish to lose," and he came to my assistance. Whenever our fish slackened the cord by doubling, we hauled on him, keeping a gentle hand on his mouth, but giving him his head when he was inclined to bolt, and managing him like a restive horse. He cer-

tainly pulled like one. It was as much as ever my entire strength could hold him. I asked old Pierre what he judged the weight of the fish to be? "Near upon seventy pounds, sir," he replied; "but it is quite time he was in the boat, and we knew for certain."

We tired master conger a bit by letting him run and half drown himself; then gradually shortening his line till we got sight of him—great, black, writhing serpent that he was, lashing up the foam with his tail, and barking at us fiercely when his head came out of water. Pierre soon struck him with our gaff-hook, and we pulled his twining carcase into the boat. He measured over seven feet long, and the old man's estimate of his weight was not exaggerated. Our conger was a very savage fish—he gnashed his teeth at us even when held down with the gaff-hook, and young Pierre, for my instruction, presented him with a piece of wood to bite, on which he pretty soon left the marks of his teeth. It is said congers will bite fingers with even greater relish—of which fact I have little doubt. We despatched our prize by first stunning him, and then cutting the back of his neck so as to divide his spine.

As the tide began to "make," we got up anchor and ran back before the wind—pretty smooth sailing in comparison to what we experienced before—whilst I resumed my place at the helm, old Pierre making me steer in through masses of sunken rocks that gleamed up past us every minute in a way that made me highly nervous, in spite of his quick eye, lest a wrong turn of the tiller should bring us upon them. However, the old man consoled me with the assurance that after all six inches was very good clearance from a rock, and reminded me I had been a long time without a pipe. This was quite true, in spite of my boast, and I was not a little glad of the triumphant excuse that my tobacco was wet, my lights spoiled, and my pipe gone. The old fellow was determined to accommodate me though, for he drew out from his locker some fine honey-dew and a dry box of lucifers, loaded a clean "cutty," and tendered a light. I was better, very much better, but really doubted if I could face a pipe just now without a relapse. Still, as it wouldn't do to be beat, I managed just to keep it alight, but hereby testify never before or since to have smoked a pipe in such dreadful discomfort.

When we got ashore, I felt for all the world like a preserved New York lobster, for my oil-skin wrappings not only kept a great deal of salt water outside, but held a great deal of salt water inside, which had washed down my neck and remained bottled up in the waterproofing. In fact, when I came to be opened and tapped, it was surprising to see how much sea-water was concealed about my person.

Our conger duly appeared next day in the Guernsey fish-market. Old Pierre had particularly wished me to try some of him for soup, assuring me I should not know it from turtle—it is indeed stated to be really very good—but Guernsey market provided something I preferred

to conger, that is to say, a hind-quarter of native lamb, weighing only three pounds seven ounces; the whole *side*, indeed, weighed but seven and a quarter pounds. The flavour of Guernsey lamb would have been delicious to a more delicate appetite than my day's fishing had provided for me.

COMMON RIGHTS AND COMMON SENSE.

WHEN noble landowners fall out, common people may hope to hold their own—an axiom of limited application, and referring mainly to common lands. Where I have been lately staying down in Hertfordshire, the two great people of the county have had a fierce dispute about common land; and the example set some time since by Mr. Augustus Smith has been followed by a noble earl. There are no prettier lanes in England than may be found round Hatfield. A rich border of grass, from which natural avenues spring up and blend their foliage into a leafy archway; glimpses on all sides of bright meadows, fine trees, and richly cultivated ground, make them the very places to drive or ramble through on a summer's holiday. The land unused upon each side these lanes, and upon which the neighbourhood has strolled, and played, and wandered ever since there was a neighbourhood at all, was quietly enclosed the other day by the noble marquis, who is the earl's political and territorial rival in the county. Worse than this, some of it formed the frontage ground to the earl's fields, and was subsequently let off, at a small rent a year, to the earl's own tenant. Nay, as if to carry defiance to extremity, this grass lane, which divides lands belonging to the earl and his relative, the viscountess, was also calmly appropriated by the marquis, a gate fixed at each end, and the lane itself let to another of the earl's tenants. The only conceivable plea for these strange proceedings was that the marquis, as lord of the manor, was asserting what he believed to be his rights. Rumour says that, a formal correspondence and remonstrance being found unavailing, the young earl summoned his retainers together, and, reviving old feudal times, led them against his rival's outworks. It is certain that fences, palings, quickset hedges, bolts, bars, and gates, suddenly disappeared one fine night, and that the earl and his followers were seen in the vicinity immediately before and after the event. Imagine the delight of people who had seen piece after piece of common land enclosed by the proud old noble in the venerable brick mansion yonder, and who had never dared to say him nay! It was not the value of the land thus filched away and restored, but the having found an aristocratic and powerful champion, that delighted them. It is said that legal proceedings will follow, that the marquis is obdurate and the earl determined. All the better for the general question; and no better earnest of having the vexed ques-

tion of the rights of lords of manors settled could be hoped for than that a nobleman of high position should be stung into doing battle in the people's cause.

I only wish we had some one equally daring at Wimbledon; things have gone ill with our common ever since it was proposed to dedicate it to the public. They tell us that its present abuse and disfigurement is for our and its ultimate good; that the lord of the manor takes a parental interest in us and in the public; and that we shall in the end be hugely benefited by what is annoying us so desperately now. Piety defines afflictions as blessings in disguise, and on this principle we are expected to welcome what seem to be aggression and outrage, with a blind faith in the wisdom and benevolence of the lord from whose hands they are said to come. It is because some of our more rebellious spirits are murmuring loudly, and for the reason that our beautiful common is rapidly deteriorating, that I wish to state briefly what our common was a few years ago, what improvements were proposed and rejected, and how thoroughly anomalous is its present condition.

The shepherd in *As You Like It* was not more astonished at learning his "parlous state" from Touchstone, than we were at hearing of the terrible condition of our breezy open space, when it was proposed to enclose it "for the benefit of the public." Numerous tramps, gipsies, annoyances, nuisances, and abuses, defective drainage, and bad pasturage, were all said to be prevalent; and the panacea to protect residents from outrage, and to secure to the public their rights, was said to be the creation of a "lord-protector," the conversion of one portion of the common into a park with lodges, railings, gates, and keepers, over which this protector should have absolute sway, and other portions into building lots. Never were the benevolent impulses of a nobleman more cruelly perverted than by the framers of this measure embodying the foregoing provisions. It is an old story now, and the bill was first modified, and altered until its character was entirely changed, and then withdrawn; but as most of the nuisances it proposed to abrogate have increased since, it will be useful to recal the professed kindness of the lord of the manor, and the questionable way in which his advisers attempted to carry that kindness into effect. There is no doubt that our common would be better for draining. After a few wet days certain parts of it become swampy; but it was concluded, strangely enough, that building villas on the prettiest portion of it, and making of the rest a neat enclosure, something between Kensington-gardens and a mammoth pound, would be an agreeable remedy for this swampiness, and would suit conflicting tastes to a nicety. The perversity of those who thought a wild common, within twenty minutes' ride of Waterloo-bridge, to be a greater boon to smoked London than any park, however trimly disciplined, is now meeting with condign pu-

nishment. A ramble over Wimbledon common, since the volunteer encampment has been removed, has just shown me that it has been shorn of its chief beauties, and that its decadence has been both rapid and disastrous.

The dangers it has escaped and the transitions it has experienced may be easily classified. Its condition before we were made aware of its abuses and defects; the proposals of the lord of the manor when mooted his scheme for its regeneration; the same proposal as modified and altered in deference to the wishes of the inhabitants of the district and the press; the nuisances and eyesores being fostered on it now; are all distinct stages in its history. What has happened at Wimbledon may happen to every common near a large town; and as, in spite of fine promises and high-sounding professions, the beautiful walks and rides we were so proud of are being gradually destroyed, and our most picturesque views rendered hideous, it will be perhaps useful to trace how these calamities have been brought about, and the nature of the warnings by which they were heralded.

After we had rallied from our first burst of astonishment at learning the horrible state of things said to be existing at our doors; after vigorously rubbing our eyes in a futile endeavour to discern the hordes of tramps and gipsies described as lawlessly squatting upon and injuring the space to be enclosed; after looking in vain for the other nuisances and annoyances so forcibly dwelt upon, we proceeded to examine the details of the scheme which was to preserve us from evils we had never felt, and to formally confer upon the public a few of the rights it had exercised without question from time immemorial. These details were soon declared to have an ugly look. The phrase "appropriation" occurred with unpleasant frequency. The public was to be "protected," and coddled, and watched, and guarded. The common which had been free as the sea-shore was to be enclosed by such fences as the lord of the manor in his capacity of "protector" of the proposed park thought fit. This protector was to be invested, moreover, with supreme power, and might create as many rides and drives, entrances and lodges, and appoint as many gate and park keepers as he thought proper. He was to put up seats, level obstructions, fill up hollows, plant trees and shrubs, and form lakes, ponds, and other ornamental works, when and where it pleased him. The park was to be open to the public at sunrise and closed at sunset on every day in the year, but admission money might be exacted whenever the sanction of the Home Secretary could be obtained. Political meetings, open-air preaching, and gatherings of working men's clubs or benefit societies, were all strictly prohibited; while the dismissal as well as appointment, together with the duties and services of park-keepers and servants, rested solely with the protector. Further, this exalted personage was to declare which of the rides and drives through the park were to be used for

cabs and public conveyances, which for exercise on horseback, where music might be played, where refreshments might be sold; and when any or all of the bye-laws and regulations should be altered or repealed. All persons found in the park after sunset were to be removed; all damage inflicted must be accounted for to the protector, who had the same legal powers given him as are enjoyed by railway companies under the Railway Clauses Consolidation act of 1845; the park-keepers were to be special constables, and might lawfully take into custody and deal with any person committing any offence in breach of any bye-law of the protector of the park; and the protector might let or sell for his own benefit all produce of the soil, and take rent from persons selling refreshments, and from those to whom he gave permission to erect buildings for entertainments or amusements. Some pieces of land within the common, on which stand a mill and outbuildings, familiar to every volunteer who has attended the annual meeting of the National Rifle Association, were to be augmented by two acres from the common, and the whole given up for the private house and gardens of the protector. In the words of the act—"For the erection at his own cost of a messuage or dwelling-house, and the formation of grounds for his own benefit and as his own absolute property;" and some of the most picturesque and beautiful portions of the common were to be sold outright, the sums paid for them to be invested in the funds in the name of the protector. The cost of enclosure, and of converting our common into a smart park, was to be defrayed out of these at the protector's discretion, and the common rights of lord and copyholders were to be paid for out of the same source. Such were the leading features of the scheme. The highly coloured nuisances, and the imaginary tramps and gipsies, were explained when we had the projected improvements shadowed forth.

The blacker the condition of the common now, and the more flagrant its evils, the more vital the necessity for reform. Picture an unwholesome swamp, infested by thieves and ruffians, and what so necessary as alteration and protection? Prove that the public were unable to partake of their legitimate enjoyment, and what so kind and benevolent as providing them with leading-strings in the shape of gravel-walks and bye-laws, of park-keepers, gates, and regular hours? But we at Wimbledon denied the alleged ills, and indignantly rejected the proposed remedies. Our daily observation, and our frequent strolls and rambles, made us eminently qualified to say whether tramps, gipsies, or nuisances were numerous or the reverse, and this part of the question met with a derisive and universal negative. Superficial observers would never have given us credit for the public spirit we displayed. For, however energetic and zealous the members of our little community may be when prosecuting their professions and businesses in town, there is not much to weld them together and to make them act in concert, in the life here.

A hasty breakfast, and a walk, drive, or ride to the train, a long fatiguing day in London, and a walk or ride from the station to our homes, a late dinner, and a short evening, make up the work-a-day lives of most of us. We have heavy dinner-parties, at which the village greengrocer supplements the domestic service of each establishment, and waits upon his employer of yesterday, with a polite assumption of never having seen him before. We have penny readings, too, where we declaim poetry, and recite humorous prose from a gusty platform, nominally for the edification of our brother the working man in the hall below, really to our sisters the fashionable ladies in the gallery above. These are almost the only occasions we see each other, except in the train and in church; and our suburban life was pre-eminently placid, decorous, and quiet, for a far longer period than falls to the lot of many villages so near London, after the railway whistle has once invaded them. But the bare thought of losing our common, of being marshalled like school-children where we could now wander at will, of seeing flower-beds and ornaments where it was our glory to know game was not unfrequently shot; of being outraged by twopenny peepshows, refreshment-stalls, circuses, swings, and peripatetic theatres being invited to hold saturnalia at so much a head, stung us to the quick. The whole district was in a ferment, and the very railway platform became a forum for discussion.

The short daily journey to and from London was one uninterrupted debate, and "To be continued in our next," applied to conversation at all times and in every place. Public meetings were called, and private conclaves commencing with soup and fish, and ending with olives and choice claret, were inaugurated. Our numerous resident lawyers supplemented with personal interest their professional skill; the proposed "protectorate" was voted an aggressive nuisance, the proposition to sell for building purposes the glades and dells now full of wild luxuriance and picturesque beauty, was vigorously, almost fiercely denounced; and eventually, such alterations were promised in the measure then before the House, as would have made it a benefit instead of an undoubted injury. The bill, as proposed to be amended, would have provided for the maintenance of the common in its present wild state, and would have placed in the hands of trustees the task of suppressing the trivial nuisances to be found on it. The Inclosure Commissioners, and the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, would each have had the appointing of a trustee, and the lord of the manor, instead of being an irresponsible dictator, would have been merely the third trustee. The clauses providing for high fences, lodges, and gates; for creating formal rides, drives, and walks, were erased, and the word "trustees" substituted for "protector" throughout. It was only after many conferences, proposals, and compromises that we succeeded in obtaining the promise that these im-

portant alterations should be made. It would be idle to enter into the arguments used, or to boast of the determined front displayed. Resolute on maintaining our rights, and on keeping the common open for the public, we should, but for the concessions made, have fought the bill stage by stage, and our advisers were confident of success. Just as we were congratulating ourselves upon having secured justice; just when the morning assemblages at the little railway station became most jubilant; just when we were all counting upon the security the amended measure would give us, we learnt that the lord of the manor had withdrawn his proposals altogether. The dubious rights of lords and commoners were to be left in abeyance, but meanwhile our common was to be untouched. We were puzzled at our own success. Some cynical spirits averred that we were premature in our jubulations, and that the apparent yielding would be found to have only heralded aggression in another form. By handing over the vague and undefined rights pertaining to a lord of the manor to independent trustees, and by accepting such portions of the original bill as provided for the preservation and maintenance of the common, we should, it was argued, have made other attempts at enclosure and encroachment impossible, and have prevented much heart-burning for the future. We had now no guarantee that the public good would not again be made the plea for cutting up and selling portions of our land, or that the lord of the manor would not show his displeasure at being thwarted in various unpleasant ways. Still, we were victorious, and, despite a few forebodings, exulted on having preserved our common from the threatened invasion and confiscation. We appointed a local committee to watch our interests; some of us joined the COMMONS PRESERVATION SOCIETY, which aims at keeping open all commons within fifteen miles of London; and are all firm in our resolution to uphold our just rights by law. Unhappily, there is great difficulty in ascertaining precisely what these rights are. The whole tenor of legislation from the time of Henry the Third downwards has been in favour of enclosing waste lands. Our forefathers never contemplated these feverish over-crowded times, when a tract of uncultivated land is infinitely more precious to the community than any number of tilled acres in the same locality; and our best lawyers differ as to the exact rights of lords of manors, and the other holders or occupiers of land. The result is eminently unsatisfactory, as the most cursory inspection of our common will show.

Manure-heaps, rubbish, stones, dead animals, and garbage, are crammed together at the corner leading from the village to the rifle-butts, making that part of it an eyesore and a nuisance; turf has been peeled off it almost by the acre; the gorse and heather, of which we were so proud, is being rapidly sacrificed; huge yawning chasms are dug across its principal road, and in the centre of a picturesque dell, which was,

until a few months ago, one of its chief beauties, is a huge brick-field several acres in extent—in short, the common is being rapidly reduced to the condition attributed to it by the detractors advocating its enclosure, and, unless steps be speedily taken for its protection, London will soon lose a magnificent natural park which no expenditure of public money could replace. In the midst of the piles of rubbish and the manure-heaps are boards, saying that it is only by permission of the lord of the manor that anything is deposited there; the workmen engaged in making the road impassable tell you they are improving it and “makin’ it more leveller;” those engaged in the brick-field say that the clay they dig is destined for drain-pipes and bricks to free the common from damp, and to build the lord of the manor a house. Thus, every injury is plausibly spoken of as a public benefit, and matters have been so ingeniously arranged that the daring people who thwarted the lord of the manor’s scheme are punished by having their beloved common rendered a dreary waste, while any attempt to restrain the encroachers, or to resent the injuries being inflicted daily, can be met by uplifted hands and loud protestations against the unreasonableness of men who would not have roads improved, or a common drained. It is difficult to plausibly account for the rubbish, so the malignant increase of this is attributed to the want of power of the lord of the manor; and, in spite of our expenditure of time and money, Wimbledon seems doomed to see her healthy open space slip away from her, and to be reduced to the alternative of accepting a park because she is threatened with a desert. This is stoutly insisted on by many as the real policy adopted, and the ugly excrescences, the gravel-pits, the blocked-up road, and the havoc made by the brick-field, are all said to be portions of a deliberate plan. The motives prompting these cruel disfigurements are of course only known to those responsible for them, but their disastrous effect may be tested by any one who will take a twenty minutes’ ride from Waterloo station. It is quite unnecessary to play the partisan, or to decide between the respective rights of Wimbledon, of the general public, and of the lord of the manor. Common sense tells us that the existing state of things is terribly unsatisfactory, and that as the dwellers near are willing to drain the common, and to pay for its proper protection, they should be allowed to do so peaceably. It is monstrous that what one man chooses to call a public benefit, or what a dozen other men declare to be desirable for the nation’s good, should be allowed to affect

lands over which every dweller in the metropolis has a moral if not a legal right. Some of my friends would have the crown buy up the rights of lords of manors, and so obtain indisputable possession of common lands. This, they argue, is the only sure way of preserving our open spaces for the public, and of effectually stopping threatened encroachments. But independently of the enormous expenditure of the national funds this course would involve, and of the tacit, and, as I think, immoral recognition of the lords’ right to enclose which it would imply, our proceedings at Wimbledon, and even the present state of our common, bad as it is, seem to prove such extreme measures to be unnecessary. The bitter annoyances and injuries we complain of, are all said to be inflicted for the ultimate good of the community. The same plea was put forth for enclosure and building; and we should be perfectly satisfied to abide by the issue raised, and to take the decision of any disinterested persons on its validity. The great difficulty is, not what is the limitation of common rights, but how far those rights may be extinguished through the supineness, timidity, or poverty of those possessing them. We want to be relieved of the responsibility of fighting an expensive public battle with a powerful opponent, and of being legally annoyed and punished for presuming to be victorious. We believe that existing rights are sufficiently strong to keep our common open to the public, and to preserve its natural beauty intact, if those rights be read by the light of common sense. We want—and “we” applies to every one interested in the preservation of the commons near London—a powerful champion such as has been found in Hertfordshire, to enforce our rights and stem the encroachments of bricks and mortar. Here is a splendid opportunity for any young peer wishing to prove that his order is as useful as, and not less chivalrous than, of old. A little determination, a little public spirit, a little independence of those subtle social influences which hedge in a lord, and the thing is done. Neither great labours nor vast attainments are required, if such a man will only be our champion, for it needs no conjuror to say whether the destruction, disfigurement, and devastation, now successfully carried on at Wimbledon be an honest way of promoting what “the protector’s” original measure termed “the enjoyment and recreation of the inhabitants of the parish and of the public at large.”

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MABEL'S PROGRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER IX. CONFIDENCES.

MRS. SAXELBY, on her arrival in Dublin with Dooley, was met by the news of Mr. Charlewood's sudden death, and of the calamity—now known to all the world—that had overtaken the great house of Gandry and Charlewood. The tidings shocked her greatly. She had seen Clement on the night before she left Hammerham, and he had then made no mention of his father's illness, or of impending disaster. Yet this was the very evening on which Lady Popham's concert took place, and on which Walter had received the fatal telegram.

"It is true," said Mrs. Saxelby, musingly, "that Clement looked shockingly ill—quite haggard and old."

Mabel drooped her head wearily.

"You are pale to-day, Mabel," said her mother. She held her daughter a little away from her, with both hands upon the girl's dark shining hair. The face she looked on now was more beautiful than that from which she had parted at Hazlehurst. There was more depth of expression in the grey eyes, shaded by their thick lashes. The contour of the cheeks was, perhaps, somewhat less full, but the features looked more formed and set, and the graceful lithe figure had become developed into the rounded outlines of early womanhood.

"You look better than when you left East-field, my child," said Mrs. Saxelby, regarding her fondly. "And yet you are working terribly hard here, too."

"Yes, mamma dear; but there is all the difference between free labour and the treadmill! My work here is done willingly, and there is hope at the end of it."

The widow and her children were installed in the lodgings which had been taken for them in Kelly's-square, in the near neighbourhood of Mr. Walton's house. Mrs. Saxelby had already taken the colours of the people about her with chameleon-like facility, and seemed to have forgotten her former doubts and objections to the theatre completely. She was never weary of listening to Mabel's theatrical experiences; or

of hearing her daughter tell, with very innocent pride, of the favour with which the audience now received her, of the practice she was getting, and of the daily progress that she felt she was making in her art. But very often, and, as it were, in Mabel's own despite, the talk between the mother and daughter would come round to the topic of the Charlewoods' altered fortunes.

"Dear, dear!" Mrs. Saxelby would say for the hundredth time, "to think—only to think of the Charlewoods' coming to be poor!"

Once, when they had been sitting silent in the twilight of a Sunday evening, Mrs. Saxelby exclaimed, suddenly, "How strangely things come about in this world, don't they? Fortune's wheel! Yes, truly a wheel. And it turns and turns—only some people get shaken off into the mire, and never have a chance of rising again. Do you remember, my dear, that day of the music meeting, and the accident?"

Mabel turned her head. Her mother could not see her face in the dim light, but her attitude was attentive.

"I will tell you what made me think of it, Mabel. I saw that little girl with your cousin Polly in church to-day, and it seemed so curious to reflect upon the changes that have taken place since you first saw her. Do you remember that day when Clement Charlewood—poor Clement!—tried to dissuade you from going to New Bridge-street?"

A little pause.

"Mabel! Do you remember?"

"Yes, mamma."

"And to think now that that child's brother should be received by such people as Lady Popham! By-the-by, I have never yet seen her brother. It is odd, considering that the little girl is to be apprenticed to your cousin's husband. How kind it was of Mr. Bensa to take her without a premium, was it not?"

This time the response was instant and hearty.

"Very kind, mamma. The Bensas' are thoroughly good people."

"Of course," pursued Mrs. Saxelby, "Mr. Bensa will pay himself out of her earnings, if he succeeds in making a singer of her. But, then, look at the risks meanwhile! It is odd, though, that I should not have chanced to see the brother yet. I remember you mentioned these Trescotts once or twice in your letters from Kilclare, and I concluded that they were quite

intimate with your aunt's family. Do they continue to like Alfred Trescott?"

"Oh, mamma," cried Mabel, hastily, "don't speak of him! The sound of his name is odious to me."

"Mabel! What do you mean?"

"I will tell you, dear mamma. I meant to tell you some time; but I did not want to annoy your ears with the tale the moment you arrived."

"But now that you have said so much, Mabel, you must say more," said Mrs. Saxelby, nervously. Mabel rose and paced about the room.

"Oh, don't frighten yourself, mamma dear," she said. "It was an annoyance—a great annoyance to me. But it is not worth distressing ourselves about further. The day before you arrived, Mr. Alfred Trescott did me the honour to ask me to marry him."

"To marry him! Him! I never heard such presumption."

"I do not know, mamma, that I have any right to say so."

"Don't tell me, Mabel. A low, vulgar, worthless fellow. I remember so well what Clement Charlewood said to me of him long ago. Oh, it puts me past all patience! This is the consequence of being mixed up with such people. Ah, Mabel, Mabel, I wish you had stayed at Eastfield, or done anything rather than this."

Mrs. Saxelby's unstable mind was already veering round again to the opposite opinion to that which she had begun to entertain respecting her daughter's line of conduct.

"But tell me what he said," she continued.

"I need not ask how you answered him."

"It was more the manner in which the offer was made, than the offer itself, that offended me," said Mabel.

And then she proceeded to relate to her mother how Alfred Trescott, "with all his blushing honours thick upon him," had come to her, and laid them, with a flourish, at her feet. She had been much startled; but she had endeavoured to make her positive refusal as gentle and as little painful as she could.

"I think you treated him a great deal too well," said Mrs. Saxelby.

"Mamma, I had no right to resent his offer. And I wished to spare him pain, if he really—if he had any—if, in short, he were truly in earnest," stammered Mabel. "But on my answer, repeated more than once with what deliberate assurance I could command of its being irrevocable—I was taken by surprise and agitated—he grew quite violent. I think I should have been frightened, had he not made me angry by something he said. But you know strong indignation drives out fear."

"Insolent wretch! What did he say?"

"Oh, some coarse insulting words about—about—I hate to repeat them, even to you. He said that he supposed I looked for riches, but that *now* I might find myself mistaken; for that Mr. Clement Charlewood—he spoke the

name openly—would be shortly left independent and wealthy, by his father's death, and that it was very unlikely he would still think of me. I bade him instantly leave my presence, and never dare to speak to me again. Then he changed his mood, and threw himself into a wild state of excitement, imploring my pardon, and trying to fall on his knees before me. But I could endure no more. I left him without another word, and I have not seen him since."

Mrs. Saxelby poured out the vials of her wrath upon Alfred Trescott. It was a ladylike and not very terrible wrath; but it was real. Will not even a timid barn-door hen cluck and peck, and beat her wings, if one offers to molest her chickens?

A short time after this conversation, Carlo Bensa informed them that Miss O'Brien was going abroad. Mrs. Dawson was to meet her son and his bride at Nice on their homeward journey, Miss O'Brien was going with her aunt, and they would all return to England together. Lady Popham would depart for London in a few weeks, and young Trescott was to accompany his patroness to the metropolis. Such was the news that the singing-master brought from Merlion-square.

"Hum, going abroad?" said Mrs. Saxelby, musingly, when Bensa had gone away. "Ah, well, I suppose *that* is all over now. If the Charlewoods have come down in the world as much as people are saying, of course Clement's match will be broken off."

"Broken off, mamma?"

"To be sure. You don't suppose that people like these Dawsons would think of allowing Miss O'Brien to marry a ruined man? Penelope told me as much as made it plain to my mind that Augusta's husband considered his family a fair exchange for her wealth. But now, if there is no wealth! Don't you see, Mabel?"

"Oh, mamma, mamma, how hard it will be for him! If he really loves her, mamma, think how he must suffer!"

"As to that, my dear child, I suppose he will, in a measure; but I dare say it won't break his heart. Men get over these things with wonderful philosophy."

Poor Mrs. Saxelby had not been able quite to forgive Clement Charlewood for the easy way in which she supposed him to have got "off with the old love" and "on with the new." It was true that Mabel had refused him. Of course, that was quite true; but Clement ought to have pined and persevered a great deal longer, if even it would not more have become him to refuse consolation from that time forth for evermore.

Mabel said no further word on the subject, but her thoughts were busied with it often. Ay, often when her lips were mechanically uttering the words of her stage part, or her eyes were mechanically conning her task for the evening.

"I would not have abandoned him, though ten times his present ruin had befallen him, if—if I had been his affianced wife." So ran her

meditations. "I would have been proud and happy to stand by his side in the face of all the world, even though we two had stood alone, hand in hand. It must be so sweet to give everything to one whom we love!"

She started as a recollection pierced her. This sweetness of self-sacrifice, the joy of this lavish offering, she had denied to Clement Charlewood. He had once longed to give up everything for her sake. He had been ready and willing to take her hand, and, if need were, to stand singly by her side before the eyes of all men. Her pride had repulsed the offer. She could not stoop to accept *everything* from his hand.

"Ah! but then I did not—did not—love him."

Not then? Not *then*, Mabel?

It is said, sometimes, that the inner life of the soul is not measured by the progress of time, as is the outer life of the body; that we may pass through years of experience in one brief hour. Is it not, rather, that the results of that inner life are made apparent to our consciousness suddenly, and that the process by which the results are attained escapes us? No human eye can perceive the growth of the humblest weed. You may watch, and watch incessantly; no movement is perceptible. But all the time the sun shines, the dew falls, the winds breathe, and, on a sudden, lo! there is the perfect flower! And we say, "It seems to have arisen by magic." But there is no magic in the matter.

In the breast of Alfred Trescott, rage, disappointment, wounded vanity, and bitter burning jealousy, struggled with some feeling that he called love, and that made him more than ever desirous of winning the haughty girl who had so decisively and, as he thought, contemptuously rejected him. It mattered not that Mabel's manner, though cold, had been gentle and courteous, until her pride and womanhood had been outraged by his coarse allusion to Clement Charlewood. It mattered not that he had allowed his violent temper and ungoverned egotism to lead him into extravagant demonstrations of passion calculated to shock and offend a young girl such as Mabel, past forgiveness. It mattered not that throughout he had thought of *himself* to the exclusion of any manly consideration for her feelings. She had refused him; had bade him quit her presence and never dare to address her more. He was furious. But his fury was directed less against Mabel than Clement Charlewood. His malignant pleasure at the news of the ruin that had befallen the family at Bramley Manor was dashed by the thought that Clement, ruined and disgraced, might yet be lord of that which he, Alfred, coveted in vain; and a revelation, made to him by Lady Popham, poured the last drop of gall into his heart, and filled it, even to overflowing, with hatred.

Alfred had now reached such a degree of confidential intimacy with his patroness, that his love for Mabel was freely discussed between them.

"She is led away by dreams of ambition,

Lady Popham, but she will not easily find a more devoted heart than mine," said Alfred, with well-acted despondency.

"Ambition, indeed!" cried my lady, tossing her head. "What does the girl dream of? Does she expect to marry a duke? Besides, that is not the question. She gave you encouragement. Strive as you will to shield her, you can't deny that."

Then my lady in her indignation told Alfred of Mr. Clement Charlewood's visit to Cloncoolin; and though she did not repeat the exact terms in which young Charlewood had spoken of him, she said enough to reveal the unfavourable nature of his words.

"I believe the girl has been playing fast and loose between you," said the angry old lady. She was raising a demon that she was powerless to guide or quell. How terrified would the foolish, kindly, impetuous old woman have been, could she but have understood for one moment the real nature of the spirit that glared out at her from beneath those black silk lashes, as she told the tale of Clement's visit to Cloncoolin!

CHAPTER X. CORDA CHOOSES.

ALFRED TRESCOTT left Merrion-square with a tearing passion in his breast, that even his practised cunning was unable wholly to conceal from Lady Popham's observation.

"Poor fellow!" thought my lady. "All fire and feeling! Nothing shall induce me to believe that he has not southern blood in his veins. Those eyes and that temperament never belonged to an Anglo-Saxon *pur sang*."

The young man hurried through the streets with a swift foot, and a feeling as though he were borne along on wings. There was no familiar demon to buoy up his steps, but the evil spirit within himself was strong to sustain him. He scarcely felt the ground as he walked, and his face looked positively diabolical in its malignant beauty. The rage that possessed him, and that made him feel as though filled with an unnatural force, tore and burnt the body which it animated. It was literally as though a keen-edged, deadly blade, were piercing the frail scabbard that contained it.

He dashed into the little parlour where his father was sitting at his usual employment, with a pile of music-paper before him.

"Hallo, Alf!" cried Mr. Trescott, looking up, on his son's abrupt entrance. "What's the matter? Bless my soul, you look as if you'd been committing murder!"

Alfred made no reply; but the face he turned towards his father certainly justified the startling exclamation. It was quite livid—Alfred always grew pale, and never red, in anger—and he was gnawing his under lip with his sharp white teeth.

"I want to speak to you, Alf," proceeded Mr. Trescott.

"I haven't time," snarled his son, savagely. "I'm going out again directly. Do you suppose I've nothing to do but to maunder about all day in this beastly den?"

Mr. Trescott's impression was that Alfred had been drinking. Absolute intoxication was very unfrequent with him. Not because he was temperate, but because he seemed unassailable by the vulgar physical retribution that usually follows excess. He would walk away, cool and wary, from orgies that left older men prostrate, or flushed and maddened with strong liquor. Still there were symptoms which his father well knew and recognised, that generally betrayed when Alfred had been drinking deeply—the white face, the glaring eye, the furious temper, tiger-like in its treacherous suddenness.

"I only wanted to say one word to you about Corda, Alf."

"What about Corda?"

"I told you that Bensa had offered to take her as his artied pupil, without a premium; and to pay himself out of her earnings if he makes a singer of her."

"You did tell me; and I told *you* what I thought about it. I should say no at once. We don't want Mr. Carlo Bensa's kind assistance. Skulking little fox!"

"But Corda, Alf, Corda! This offer of Bensa's holds out a prospect for her that is not likely to recur. The child is fond, too, of his wife and all of 'em—"

"The child's a deuced sight *too* fond of whining and whimpering to strangers, and carrying tales. I have told you over and over again that I'll look after Corda; but I'll do it in my own way, and at my own time, and I won't be dictated to by anybody."

"Well, Alf," said Mr. Trescott, looking up defiantly while his lame side twitched nervously, "I don't see that much good has come, or is likely to come, to her from your brotherly love and protection. We won't trouble you. I am Corda's father, and have a right to do as I like. And the long and the short of it is, that I have accepted Bensa's offer. I merely wished to tell you."

Alfred rapped out a fierce oath. "You have accepted, have you?" said he, glaring at his father. "What the devil have you been wasting my time for in jawing about it, then? It will be better for *me*, no doubt. I wash my hands of her. Whether you haven't made a little mistake in your calculations, time will show."

Mr. Trescott shrugged his shoulders. "Here is a note for you," he said, "that I got at the treasury this morning when I went for my money and yours. They gave me your week's salary, but I expect I know pretty well what the note is about."

Alfred tore the letter open, and, having read it, tossed it contemptuously across to his father. It was a dismissal from his situation in the orchestra of the Dublin theatre, couched in a few severe words, referring to his constant neglect of his duties there.

"It's a pity," sighed the father. "You might as well have had the money up to the end of the season. But I knew this would come. I was sure of it. Barker has been very waxy about you for this long time past."

Alfred audibly consigned Mr. Barker and all his company to the uttermost depths of destruction. "Did the fool think his twopence-halfpenny a week could keep an artist like *me* in his band? Did he suppose *I* was going to sit fiddling to his trash of raw-head and bloody-bone melodramas night after night? Ecod, its amusing!"

But the laugh with which Mr. Alfred Trescott concluded and emphasised his speech was by no means amusing. It so little amused Corda, who entered the room in the midst of it, that she stood trembling and astonished in the doorway, with her eyes fixed on her brother.

Her father called the child to him. "You look frightened, little one," said he, soothingly. But his countenance, too, was disturbed, and his hand shook as it stroked her hair.

"Oh, that's the latest thing, is it?" muttered Alfred, glancing at them with a frown. "She's frightened of me, is she? Go on. You're improving her education at a pretty rate, and she's an apt scholar in hypocrisy and humbug."

Corda broke from her father, who made a half-concealed effort to detain her, and, running to Alfred, took his hand and kissed it. She could not reach to his face, for he stood stiffly at his full height.

"Dear Alf," she said, "I am not afraid of you, and no one can make me so; no one tries to do so, indeed. I do love you, Alf; you know I love you, indeed."

It may have been the mere soothing to his self-love, sorely stung as it had been that day, or perhaps—God knows—some throb of natural affection not quite deadened in his perverted heart, that made him stoop and kiss her. The child threw her arms around his neck and pressed him to her breast with all her feeble power. "There's my own Alf," she said, in her quaint grave way, though her lips quivered and the tears were shining in her eyes. "You *will* be good, won't you, Alf dear?"

"Look here, pussy-cat," said her brother, suddenly. "I want to speak to you."

He seated himself and drew her to his side with one arm about her waist, and his other hand on her forehead, so that he could read her upturned face at his ease. "I think you *are* fond of me." He checked her eager answer, and went on. "Now, I am going to see whether it's all talk or whether there's anything real in it; do you understand? I am going to London. You know that. Very well. There has been some talk of apprenticing you to Mr. Bensa. Don't interrupt me, father! You shall have your say afterwards. Now, Corda, I don't like that scheme at all. I'm not fond of the Bensas, and I know very well that there's no love lost between us. If you stay here with them I shall wash my hands of you, get rid of you, trouble myself no more about you. You know what I mean. No need to cry. Listen. If, instead of that, you go to town with me and the governor, I will look after you. I have high friends, rich friends, who can help me, and

help me to help you. Now choose for yourself. I give you till to-morrow to decide. But, you know me, Corda; if I bid you good-bye here, and leave you with the Bensas, it will be a good-bye that may last your lifetime."

Mr. Trescott broke in excitedly:

"I won't have this, Alfred. It is cruel. You are torturing the child to no purpose. She cannot decide for herself. I—I must decide for her, judge for her, and think of her future."

He limped about as his habit was when strongly moved or irritated, and Corda looked from her father to her brother with sad perplexed eyes, blurred by tears.

Alfred ran up-stairs to his bedroom, whence he presently returned with a gay silver-mounted cane, and a pair of fresh delicate-hued gloves. He had arranged his long hair picturesquely, and had effaced in a great measure the traces of anger and excitement from his countenance. He passed through the small parlour in silence; but when his hand was on the door Corda raised her face, which had been hidden in her hands, and said: "Alf dear, Miss Mabel is going to London too, isn't she? Should I see her there?"

The varying hues of the sea, when the wild wind drives the clouds above it, are not more swift and startling in their changes than were the expressions that flitted over Alfred's handsome, evil young face, as his sister spoke. For one instant he stood irresolute, his dark eyes blazing, and his whole mien that of one who was about to burst forth into some violent ebullition of anger. But he restrained the impulse. The straight dark brows drew together into a black frown; the well-cut mouth writhed itself into a sneer.

"Yes, Corda," he said, very slowly, and in a soft sweet voice that was unnatural in its tone, "yes; if that is an inducement, I think I can promise that you shall see—Miss Mabel, if you go to London."

When her brother had left the house, Corda remained silent for some time, with her soft brown curls bowed down upon her hands. Mr. Trescott continued to move fretfully about the room, now and again uttering ejaculations of impatience and vexation. At length he took up his pen, and seated himself again before his music-paper.

Then Corda rose and crept up to him.

"Papa," she whispered, timidly.

"Well, my pet?"

"May I—will you let me do as I like?"

"I cannot promise that, my little girl. You are not old enough to judge what is best for you."

Corda was silent for a few minutes, and laid a caressing hand on her father's shoulder. Presently a hot tear fell on Mr. Trescott's hand as he wrote; then another, and another. He turned and looked at Corda. The sight of her sorrow was unendurable to him.

"Why, my pretty, my gentle little girlie, you mustn't fret! Don't cry, Corda; for God's sake don't cry! I will—I—There, you shall do anything you like, if you only will not fret."

She threw herself into her father's arms.

"Oh, papa dear, I am so sorry for Alf. Yes; yes, I know that he is getting on well, and all that. And, of course, he is quite sure to succeed in London. Almost quite sure, if—he will practise a little more. But, papa, I sometimes think that Alf wants somebody to help him to be good, and to love him. You saw that he was kind to me just now, although he had been in one of his naughty passionate moods the minute before."

"Kind to thee, my little lamb! Who could be unkind to my Corda? But Alf doesn't treat you well. Nor me either."

"I don't mind, papa—not for myself, that is. I know he does not really mean it. And—don't be angry with me, papa—but I think sometimes that he sees you love me the best; and he may fancy, you know, that nobody loves him. And, papa, he is mamma's boy too, isn't he? Poor mamma, who died when I was a tiny baby! I never knew mamma; but, somehow, I feel so sure that she would wish me to stay with Alf, and to love him. Perhaps—don't be sorry, dear, it's only *perhaps*, you know—I might not live to grow very old. And if I died before Alfred, I should like to tell mamma when I see her in heaven, that I loved her boy, and stayed with him to the last."

The sweet voice faltered, and the delicate head drooped on her father's shoulder, and his tears were mingled with hers.

Truly Miss Fluke had found Corda an unpromising pupil, and had made many dismal moans over her dark and unconverted state of mind. But it may be—although the suggestion is doubtless a bold one—that there is a higher code of Christian ethics than even Miss Fluke's, a code which finds some echo in every human heart, and whose ruling law is Love.

When Alfred returned home that evening, Corda, who had been sitting up for him in her own little room, stole forth to tell him that papa had consented to let her go with him to London, and that she was very glad.

"The governor's come round to see which side of his bread the butter lies, has he?" said Alfred. "But, Corda, you shan't repent sticking to me. You shall be made a singer yet, if you've set your heart on it. I'll get you the first masters in London, men who wouldn't hire Bensa to play accompaniments for them. You shall ride in your carriage, and splash Bensa with the mud from its wheels, some day. By G—— you shall!"

"Hush, *please*, Alf dear! Thank you very much; but I do think Mr. Bensa is very clever and very kind, and I love him and Madame Bensa very much. Only, of course, Alf, I love you better, and so does papa."

It had been a struggle for the child to resign the hope of a home with these kind people, and the prospect of being thoroughly instructed in the art she loved so well.

"But," said Corda, sagely to herself, as she took off and neatly folded her poor garments before going to rest, "being apprenticed to

Mr. Bensa always seemed too easy and pleasant to be real. I liked it so much, that I didn't believe it *could* come true. I want so very much to do right. I hope this is right, and I think it must be, for—it's an odd thing, but I have always noticed it—the things that are easy and pleasant, and that you like best, are so often wrong."

It was a hard saying for so young a creature. But Corda's life-lessons were being learned in a hard school.

CHAPTER XI. THE LONDON MANAGER.

"HAVE you it on authority?" asked Mrs. Digby Wylde, the leading lady, in a deep-toned voice. "Because it seems to me very, *very* improbable."

"To be sure," rejoined our old acquaintance, Mr. Snell, recently promoted to the position of second low comedian at the Theatre Royal, Dublin; "on the best authority. Oh, it's quite correct, you may depend upon it, Mrs. Wylde. You'll see our young friend's name in big letters at the Royal Thespian Theatre before next year's out. And *that's* a nice state of things for the profession to have come to, ain't it?"

Mrs. Digby Wylde smiled contemptuously.

"To me," she said, in her loftiest manner, "it matters little. For the sake of the profession in general, I own I think this kind of thing deplorable—deplorable!"

"Ah—h—h," exclaimed a stout old gentleman, in a court suit and powdered wig, drawing a long breath and nodding portentously, "I tell you what it is, ma'am, the London stage is going to the deuce as fast as it can go. The provinces, ma'am, the provinces are the home of the drama. I went to London for a fortnight during our last vacation, and I was astonished at the exhibitions they will tolerate on the metropolitan boards. By George, I should like to see 'em stand it here, that's all! Why, they'd fling the benches at you!"

"Umph!" grunted Jerry Shaw, who was squeezed into the darkest corner of the green-room, where this talk was going on one evening during the performance. "Aha! Well, it's a comfort for us who can't get to London to think of that, anyhow."

Mrs. Wylde merely shrugged her shoulders disdainfully. She had tried one or two passages of arms with old Jerry, and—being by no means a fool—had perceived the unlikelihood of any glory to be derived by her from such combats. She therefore preserved an attitude of armed neutrality in his presence. But the stout old gentleman, who was rather obtuse, did not imitate her wisdom.

"Mr. Shaw," said he, with some heat, "I'll trouble you to speak for yourself when you talk about people who *can't* get to London. I beg to inform you, sir, that as far as *I* am concerned, the difficulties have been all of my own making—all of my own making, sir."

"Of course," said Jerry, in his sharpest

tones, and jerking out his words in little short sentences, "no doubt of that. You wouldn't suit the Cockneys a bit. No more should I. You're too clever for 'em. And I'm not clever enough. That's a *quare* thing when you come to look at it."

Mr. Snell stood by, rubbing his hands, and maliciously enjoying the duel—a very unequal one, save that the stout old gentleman possessed that mail of proof which Napoleon ascribed to the British army—he did not know when he was beaten.

"Well," said Mr. Snell, "it's to be hoped that Miss M. A. Bell will prove clever enough, and not too clever. It's a fine thing to be a novice. I wish I was a novice. Perhaps a London manager would take a fancy to *me*, then."

"Perhaps he might," said Jerry, "because then there'd be some hope of your improving."

"Ha, ha! Not bad, Mr. Shaw, not bad," laughed Mr. Snell, colouring scarlet through his stage rouge. "I'm never angry at anything *you* say."

"Sorry I can't return the compliment. I'm angry at a good many things *you* say."

"Oh!" sneered Mr. Snell, "if you're angry with everybody who doesn't admire Miss Bell, you'll have plenty to do."

"But if I make friends with everybody who does admire her, I shall have a vast deal more to do. Why the devil—I beg your pardon, Mrs. Wylde—why in the world can't you let the girl alone? Isn't she as sweet and good natured as a May morning? Does she ever carp, or backbite, or say unkind things of, or to, any of ye? I was going to say, 'isn't she a lady to the backbone,' but on second thoughts I won't trouble you with that argument," muttered old Jerry, finishing his speech almost inaudibly.

"Mr. Shaw is of opinion," said Mrs. Wylde, majestically, "that his present hearers are incompetent to appreciate Miss Bell's ladylike qualities."

At this moment the call-boy summoned Mr. Shaw, and Jerry hobbled out of the green-room without deigning to reply to Mrs. Wylde's last speech.

"But is it really true, Snell," said the stout old man, as soon as Jerry Shaw had left the room—"is it really true that Allen has engaged Miss Bell for the Thespian?"

"I believe it is. I tell you how I heard it. My dresser is the landlord of the house where the Trescotts lodge, and he says that little Corda is full of some grand thing or other that's to happen to Miss Bell, and that she said she was going to London; and my dresser says, too, he suspects there's been some split between that conceited puppy Alfred Trescott and the Walton party. But the little girl won't say anything about it, or can't. And I know, too, from another source, that Allen spoke very highly of Miss B. to Barker. And altogether, I should say there's no doubt that——"

The tide of Mr. Snell's gossip was cut short here by the entrance into the green-room of Mr. Alaric Allen, the London manager, whose supposed approval of poor Mabel had excited such commotion in the theatre. This gentleman, besides being the manager of a leading London theatre, was also one of the most accomplished actors of his day. He was at present performing in Dublin as a "star." And we may know positively, what Mr. Snell could only make a shrewd guess at, by dint of piecing together such scraps of second-hand information as he could gather, and which he was never deterred from availing himself of by any foolish scruples of delicacy or honour. It was true that Mr. Alaric Allen, lessee and manager of the Royal Thespian Theatre, London, had been so struck by Mabel's fresh grace and dramatic power, that he had offered her an engagement for the following season at his theatre, promising to bring her out with every advantage that the resources of his establishment could command; for it was a time of peculiar dearth and barrenness in the theatrical field, and a novelty—above all, a *young* novelty—was being sought for by more than one enterprising manager. Besides, too, the only successful début, for a long time past, had taken place at the theatre of a rival manager, whom Mr. Alaric Allen cordially hated, and to compete with Dobbs, and to beat him on his own ground, would be a very agreeable thing for Mr. Alaric Allen. Dobbs's débutante was a Pomeranian lady, who, oddly enough, talked with a slight brogue, and who—her *spécialité* being rather the pantomimic than the dramatic art—had pieces written for her in which she invariably crossed a ravine or a mountain torrent, or even simply passed from house-top to house-top, on the slack rope. This feat, very gracefully performed in a very airy costume, had taken the town by storm, and for a long time had brought large sums of money to Mr. Dobbs's exchequer. But at last the town appeared to have had enough of the slack rope; and, as Mr. Dobbs pathetically observed, even the tight rope—for the Pomeranian lady tried that—failed to pull the houses up again.

"I think we'll do a little better than the Pomeranian," said Mr. Alaric Allen to his wife, when they were discussing Mabel. Mr. Allen's theatre was really one of the best conducted and of the highest standing in London. He himself was a man of considerable culture outside his own especial art, and he had an honest love for acting which made him desire to present his plays to the public interpreted by the best performers whose services he was able to command.

It was settled that Mabel should remain in Mr. Barker's company for a couple of months longer, and should then proceed to London to commence rehearsals, so as to be ready to make her début at a favourable period of the London season. Juliet was the character fixed upon for her first appearance.

"It's hackneyed," said Mr. Allen, "but

there's nothing better. Above all, as you're so young, why the very idea of a Juliet under forty will be an attraction of itself."

Mr. Barker, a good-natured man enough, and very willing to oblige his metropolitan brother-manager, had promised that Mabel should have more than one opportunity of playing Juliet before leaving Dublin. As he could not keep the young actress in his own theatre, he had no objection to make her farewell performances as brilliant as possible.

"Well, all the world is going to London, I declare!" said Mrs. Walton to her niece. "There's young Trescott, and yourself. Fancy that rich old lady taking him to town with her. They say that she expects him to do wonders in the musical world."

"And so he will, Mary!" said her husband.

"No doubt of it," cried Jack.

"We shall see," said Janet.

"But our Mabel is *sure* to succeed," said Mrs. Walton. There was a unanimous chorus of "Sure—quite sure;" whereupon Madame Bensa's baby, who was present, swelled the sound with gurgling hilarity, and crowed and kicked again.

"If I do," said Mabel, between smiling and crying, "it will be thanks to you all. Do you remember the Arabian Nights story you told me when I first came here, Uncle John? Well, but I am no such heroine as the Princess was. She had to toil up the hill all alone. Now, I have dear loving voices to cheer my way, and drown the airy sound of taunting and derision."

"I'm not sure," said Janet, musingly, "that, although the way would be drearier, a woman might not be the more likely to come to the mountain-top if she *were* all alone."

"Well, cousin Janet, perhaps that depends upon what she wants to find when she gets to the summit. The magic tree has different sounds for different ears. And mine whispers me, waving its branches and rustling its leaves melodiously, 'Here under my shade is a rest and a shelter where you may abide in peace with the hearts that love you.'"

END OF BOOK IV.

THE SPIRIT OF PROGRESS.

ANCIENT mythology states that, previous to the Iron and Silver Ages, there was one which, on account of its excellence, was called Golden, during which our planet was a paradise, and primitive man lived in a state of happy innocence. The present age has been named the Age of Brass, rather satirically, however, than philosophically; but is generally included under the term of the Iron Age, which has now endured for at least six thousand years. In the age that preceded, and which has lately received the title of pre-historic, and of which we know nothing except from the scattered tradi-

tional literature, of which we are afraid the last remnants have reached us in the Collections of Mr. Dasent and Mr. J. F. Campbell, there are vestiges of much goodness surviving in an era of Force, and serving to initiate an Intellectual cycle, the culmination of which has been reserved for the present epoch. The era of brute power was dark enough, but the cloud had a silver lining which it graciously turned forth upon the night. Nevertheless, the intellectual aspects are rude and elementary, and appear to have been as little moral as they were scientific. The social state, in the traditional records, scarcely exists, and the rights of property are slenderly regarded. At any rate, the intellectual instinct is not identified with honesty, and the law of meum and tuum is violated with impunity. The Master Thief is a clever fellow, and a leading hero in all the tales. He simply makes brute power ridiculous by the exercise of his wit, and takes advantage of the blindness and stupidity of his opponent. And power, on the part of the latter, is exerted with as little reference to morality. With power it is a mere question of overreaching or strength. Everywhere there is preoccupation by a barbarous race which the new-comers have to circumvent by skill or courage. Individual cunning or strength has to prove itself a match for numbers, and at length, whether in life or death, it conquers; in the first it is the hero who triumphs, in the second his cause.

With certain modifications, however, these tales of the past are also those of the present. Looking to facts now occurring, and to history, says one of the collectors of these old stories, traditional fictions look very true, for battles are still a succession of single combats, in which both sides abuse each other, and after which they boast. War is rapine and cruel bloodshed, as described by old fishermen in Barra, and by the Times' correspondent at Tetuan. It is not, he sagely adds, altogether the chivalrous pastime which poets have sung.

It is true that now, except with the very ignorant, iron weapons are no longer magical, horses no longer hallowed, birds no longer soothsayers, oak-trees, wells, swine, and apples no longer sacred, nor combs wonderful; yet, as among the Scythians, the Iron Sword is with many a god, and the various accessories of privileged wealth objects of great veneration. The only difference that seems to exist is that they are not so rare as in the days of the times of old when Ossian sang and Fingal fought. It was natural that the Iron Sword should be worshipped by a people with whom Iron was rare, as a mystic personage, that shone, that cried out, and wherewith the lives of men were bound up. But there is no such excuse now for the superstition, nevertheless it has still its worshippers—men and governors of states who appeal to it and perish by it, as if a supernatural virtue belonged to the material. Surely, the smith should still have his place in the pantheon of nations.

In the past, the man of the sword was a ci-

viliser. The evil powers, it was thought, could not resist iron; and these were the skin-clad warriors who shot flint arrows, and whose remains are even now traceable in various parts of Europe. We meet with them in tradition as bogles and demons, even as fairies; and the swordsman was the champion of Heaven who successfully resisted the Devil. The fiend was always painted as a fool, and got the worst of the fight. "In all probability," says the critic, "the fiend of popular tales is own brother to the Grugach and Glashan, and was once a skin-clad savage, or the god of a savage race." We know that Mahomet resisted the idolators of his age, and spread his own doctrine by means of the soldier; and long before his day the worship of the scimitar prevailed with a people who are classed with the Indo-European races, and whose influence has survived with us for more than two thousand years, and identified itself, perhaps, with all magic swords from the time of Herodotus down to the White Sword of Light of the West Highlands.

But the moral is reversed when the man of Iron has superseded the man of Stone, and in turn become himself the tyrant. It is then that Intellect separates itself from Violence, and depends on moral means for achieving moral ends. From these means fraud is gradually eliminated, for fraud is only force in a more subtle guise. Yet for a long period strength will be regarded with especial favour; nay, still is so regarded. The muscular athletes of the present day are the most popular performers at the music-halls. Leotard and Avolo are more highly esteemed than the most accomplished tenor. It is little more than a century ago since the town was thoroughly excited by the feats of a Samson of the day. It was just at the time when Admiral Vernon had achieved a great naval victory by the reduction of Porto Bello, and the capture of the seaport of Carthagena, in Spain, which last event, in those days of slow travelling, took more than a month in reaching England. A man named Topham, celebrated for his muscular power, determined to take advantage of the occasion, and announced, in honour of the victory, a grand trial of strength. On the 28th of May, 1741, the performance came off in the thoroughfare now known as Bath-street, Clerkenwell, in which street three hogsheds of water, together weighing one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six pounds, were placed on a timber frame. Standing above them, Topham, by means of a stirrup over his shoulder, fastened to a strong cord, contrived to lift the cumbrous load several inches, in the presence of Admiral Vernon himself, who had mingled with the crowd. The performance became so popular that Topham's portrait was frequent on signboards in and about the metropolis. Though only about five feet ten inches in height, this man's strength was indeed extraordinary. He could pull against a horse with his feet placed against a low wall, roll up a pewter dish with his fingers, and lift with his teeth a table six feet long, with

a half-hundred-weight attached to it. He valued himself, however, on other accomplishments; for he was acquainted with music, and his biographer heard him sing a solo to the organ of St. Wedburgh church, Derby. He adds, that "his voice, more terrible than sweet, seemed scarce human;" and also, that "the ostler of the Virgin's Inn having given him some cause of displeasure, he took one of the kitchen spits and bent it round his neck like a handkerchief." It is also recorded of him that one night, perceiving a watchman asleep in his box, he raised both from the ground, and dropped them over the wall of Bunhill-fields burying-ground. He kept once a public-house in Islington, and, being visited by two quarrelsome men who wished to fight him, he seized both by the neck, and knocked their heads together until they asked pardon. But his strength was no more security to him than it was to the heroic Hebrew who was betrayed by Delilah. Topham had an unfaithful wife, whom he stabbed in a fit of jealousy, and then slew himself.

In the Bone or Flint Age, that, rather than the silver or the golden, really preceded the Iron, Topham would have been esteemed a great man, on account of his personal strength, though he would scarcely have been reckoned a giant. Nevertheless, there has been much exaggeration in relation to the giants of old. Those of the Highlands were not so big but that their conquerors wore their clothes; nor were they so strong that men could not beat them, even by wrestling. Topham himself was once beaten in a trial of strength and skill to which he was unaccustomed. At a public-house frequented by the Finsbury archers, Topham ventured to give his opinion that the long bow was a plaything fit only for a child. One of the archers laid a wager with him that he would not draw the arrow two-thirds of its length. Of course, he readily accepted the bet, assured that he should win; but, drawing the bow towards his breast instead of his ear, he was greatly mortified in being obliged to pay the forfeit, after, it is said, many fruitless efforts. For the want of knowledge, skill, and practice in the art, his strength availed him nothing. Skill places mere strength at a discount; and the giant, in the long run, proves to be merely a savage whom the more civilised man is certain to subdue.

Though we have not learned to dispense with the sword, yet we do depend more on the power and influence of that intelligence of which it was once the instrument, than they who then wielded it were accustomed to do. The soldier has been in a great measure supplanted by the savant. Steam, gas, electricity are his weapons, and with them he changes the face of the world, shaping it almost to his own will. The wonders of the old fairy tales are far surpassed by the exploits of modern scientific discoverers, and results once supposed miraculous are now produced by natural means within the comprehension of the humblest inquirer, not at wide intervals of time, but daily. Being no longer

rare, they have ceased to be surprising; and, viewed in the light of common day, have become familiar and ordinary. Other wonders have to be sought for outside the scientific circle, just like table-rapping and such inexplicable matters, in which imagination asserts some of its ancient privileges, and the faith that never dies gives substance and evidence to things hoped for and unseen. But the real miracles are still within the circle, and passing in the public life of the world, in the progress of society, in the march of events, and in the improvement of individual character. The general level is higher than at any former period, and ages lie buried beneath the ground on which we travel—faster and faster every year. The supernatural may have given way to the natural, but the natural is still more full of wonders.

The time has been, and not long since, when all this would have been esteemed "wild talk," but "now the time gives it warrant." To keep our admiration, however, within bounds, the world has grown critical. We have a critical philosophy, a critical theology, and a critical literature, the last in great abundance. With all this jog-trot, people, who would keep the even tenor of their way without questioning or being questioned, are offended. They like not interference with their creeds, their opinions, and their tastes; and less like to be called upon to form new ones. Nevertheless, the force of this intelligence alone, with nothing but moral influence for its weapon, is stronger than that of the Sword or Scimitar, and will, like Truth, prevail, and finally substitute a better system of things for that which is passing away. It would appear, indeed, that the Ages of Silver and Gold belong rather to the Future than to the Past; that they have not come, but are coming. Or if referable to former states of being, they imply rather the pre-existence of the philosophers and poets than the earthly paradise of the cosmogonist, if indeed they have not the same meaning, which is probable. If this be true, they still continue to exert a mysterious energy on the world of progress in which we live, as eternal impulses perpetually urging on the mind to novel efforts and greater excellence. If we had no real reason to dread this civilising intelligence when aided by carnal weapons, we have still less to dread it now that it aims at all manner of reformations without it. It has still its work to do as a civilising agent. There are still fairies and giants in popular superstition quite as bad if not worse than those that the Sworded civiliser had to contend with. There are parts of the earth, too, suffering still from the ancient darkness which has been only partially dispelled. But we have the experience of the past to guide us in the present, and from this we learn that we have only to allow perfect liberty to the intelligent factors now at work in every direction to secure for the future that development of the human in each individual by which he is made a good and rational member of society. It is to Education that we must trust the destinies of peoples and nations; and

let the proper training begin early in life, so shall the best secure the result, and make "the Child the Father of the Man."

THE MODERN JOSHUA.

A TYNESIDE TALE.

I.

To drag the wheels of Time, and stay their rolling,
While at their usual speed they rattle by,
Like railway trains that never wait for coaling,
But on their course swift as an arrow fly,
Has proved a problem beyond man's controlling,
Though some men have been bold enough to try;
And Joshua thereby gained high renown,
Through whom the sun was stayed from going down.

II.

King Mycerinus* stole a march on Time
(Herodotus relates, 'mong other scandals),
Spending his years in revelry sublime,
And turning night to day with countless candles;
Tom Moore, whose wit is ever in its prime
When wine and wassail are the theme he handles,
Sings that, to clog his wings, each jolly soul
Should seize old Time, and souse him in the bowl.

III.

"Necessity's the mother of invention,"
The proverb says; but as her *father's* name
Has ne'er been brought to light, 'tis my intention
To that paternity to urge the claim
Of one, whose 'cuteness I'm about to mention,—
A modern Joshua, all unknown to fame,
Who late, without a miracle to brag on,
Contrived the wheels of Time to clap a drag on.

IV.

A northern vicar, whose extensive parish
Shows population scant, and hamlets rarish,
Rode forth one day to its remotest border,
To see his distant flock were all in order;
To warn the careless, and to cheer the sighing,
Relieve the poor, console the sick and dying,
Reprove Job White for that last drunken frolic,
Prescribe some "doctor's stuff" for Sally's colic,
Rebuke the loungers at the "Cat and Bagpipes,"
For boozing half the night and smoking shag pipes;
To write to London about Smith's "Blind Pen-
sion."

To act as Makepeace in some dire dissension;
Collect the club-pence of each thrifty matron,
And blow up those who let their payments late run;
To see about a "place" for Coulson's daughter,
Where she may practise all his wife has taught her;
To urge Joe Scott to send his lads to school,
Instead of hunting rats in "Miller's Pool;"
In short, discharging all those various duties
Which bind him to his flock with ever new ties;
Making the priest round every village steeple
The friend, adviser, pastor, of his people;
While through the whole he works the gospel
leaven,

Teaching men, still on earth, to live for heaven.
But to my tale, which all this time is waiting,
As if my Pegasus had stopped for baiting.

V.

The church was decked at morning-tide,
The bridesmaids fluttered fair,
And bride and groom wait side by side,
But where's the vicar?—Where?

* Herodotus, book ii. ch. cxxxiil.

VI.

They've sought him baith in cot and ha',
He's naewhere to be seen;
And much they fear he's rade awa'
To far off Halton Green.

VII.

Here was a fix! For twelve o'clock drew near,
While for their truant vicar they stood sighing:
That hour, by night, to ghosts and goblins dear,
By day to ardent lovers sorely trying;
Because, if soon the parson don't appear,
Until next day they must postpone his tying
In nuptial noose as man and wife their neck fast;
Then what a bore to spoil the wedding breakfast!

VIII.

Meanwhile our vicar, passing to the next on
His list of visitees, had ta'en his seat
By Molly Brown's bedside, to enlarge some text on,
Which in her present sickness he judged meet;
When, looking up, he saw Jock Graves, the sexton,
Rush to the window in a blaze of heat,
Exclaiming, breathless, as he popped his head in,
"The weddin', sur! Ye've clean forgot the wed-
din'!"

IX.

"The wedding! Careless mortal I must be!
You're right, Jock; I'd forgotten all about it."
Then, pulling out his watch, cried, "Let me see!
Shall I have time yet? No; I greatly doubt it.
However, country clocks don't all agree;
I'll have a try; there's nothing done without it.
While o'er my head there hangs, to urge a man on,
The lugbear of that Sixty-second Canon."

X.

"Suspensio per triennium ipso facto"
Is there pronounced on any luckless loon
Of parish priest, who ventures 'gainst this Act to
Unite a pair of lovers, late or soon,
Except at certain hours, laid down, hoc pacto,
'Twixt eight o'clock A.M. and twelve at noon,
Save those who show of dignity such high sense
As to provide themselves a "special license."

XI.

This was exacted in the good old days,
Which every whipper-snapper now disparages,
Its object being, as the Prayer-book says,
To hinder, as one ought, clandestine marriages.
Our honest church abhors all back-stairs ways,
Which surely lead to family miscarriages,
And by this canon brings folks to a dead lock
Who choose unlawful hours to enter wedlock.

XII.

Our vicar, not having a moment to spare,
Ran straight to the stable and got out his mare;
He sprang on her back, and he gave her the reins;
He scoured across moors, over fields, along lanes.
Dick Turpin himself didn't make shorter work
As he spurred on Black Bess in his gallop to York;
Nor did famed Tam O'Shanter, who quaked in his
breeches,
Faster urge his grey Meg as he rode from the
witches.

XIII.

Like young Lochinvar, who "came out of the west,
And through all the wide Border his steed was the
best,
He stayed not for brake, and he stopped not for
stone,
He swam"—no Esk river, because there was none;
But ere he arrived at the parish church gate,
The bride all but fainted, the priest was so late;

While the bridegroom stood threatening an action at law
'Gainst the parson who'd made such an awful faux pas.

XIV.

His heart 'gainst his ribs beating nickety-knock,
He flew into church, and he looked at the clock,
And he found that the race he had just *shaved* to win it;
For its hands of the hour wanted barely a minute!
He threw on his surplice, and rushed to the altar,
And "Dearly beloved" just managed to falter
Before, as he fancied, the clock had struck twelve,
Which, for that day at least, the proceedings would shelve.

XV.

The fatal hour thus closely nicked, our priest
Went on more calmly to discharge his function;
And, thankful from his fix to be released,
Performed the service with unwonted unction;
Between the happy pair, before he ceased,
Acting a kind of "copulative conjunction,"
He riveted, "for better or for worse,"
Those bonds for life a blessing, or a curse!

XVI.

The ceremony ended, they withdrew
Into the vestry next, to sign the register,
And harmless jests round bride and bridegroom flew,
As jointly thus they ratify their pledge—a stir
Kept up by bridegroom's men, a jolly crew,
Whose wits, that wedding morn, with sharpened
edges stir;
E'en the "late vicar" with their jokes they press
well,
As all but, *a priori*, rivalling Cresswell!

XVII.

"Well, let them laugh that win," rejoined the vicar,
"And in this present race I've not been loser;
George Rodham's self could scarce have done it
quicker,
Though mounted upon Mr. Rarey's Cruiser!
Upon the road I didn't stop to 'liquor,'
But o'er my fences like a bird I flew, sir,
And thanks, at last, to my good mare's assistance,
Contrived by half a head to 'save my distance!'"

XVIII.

"It's varra weel to crack about yor *mere*"
(Chuckled the clerk, when gone were all the party),
"But if Josh Robinson had not been here,
A bonny mess there wad hae been, maw sarty!"
"What do you mean, Josh, by that roguish leer?"
"What div aw mean?" quoth Josh, with grin so
hearty;
"Twas close on twelve, sur, when aw started Jock;
So just to gie ye time—aw stopped the clock!"

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

THE WRECK OF THE ROTHSAY CASTLE STEAM-PACKET.

At ten o'clock on the morning of the 17th of August, 1831, the Rothsay Castle steamer, running between Liverpool and Beaumaris and Bangor, was getting up steam in the Mersey. The sea had been very rough the night before, so much so that an American ship towed into the offing at daybreak had prudently returned to her former anchorage. But the wind went down as the day advanced, and though there was a heavy ground-swell, there was nothing

else to alarm or delay the reckless captain of the steamer, who had one hundred and fifty sailors, engineers, and passengers in his care.

Ten o'clock was the proper time of starting, but the passengers were tardy, and at eleven a Mr. Foster arrived with his wife, servant, and carriage. This gentleman had resolved not to go by the packet, but, finding the steamer not yet started when he reached the shore, he changed his mind, and at once embarked. At nearly half-past eleven the steamer was still hanging about for dilatory passengers, but a Mr. Leigh, of Liverpool, then threatening to report the captain for his unpunctuality, he at last sullenly yielded. He moved his hand, the engines heaved and rocked, and the band, mechanically gay, began playing "Cheer up, cheer up."

The shore bell rang in petulant haste. There was much kissing and pressing of hands, and the plank was drawn in. Soon the shores receded, and the fluttering handkerchiefs and waving hands grew too small to be distinguished. As the forts were passed, the sailors began to get the steamer ship-shape, coiled away ropes, got out the sail, arranged the benches, and lowered the trunks and boxes into the hold.

The passengers were of all classes—Welsh clergymen, many ladies, London solicitors and men of business, Liverpool merchants, persons from Bury, Cheadle, and Rochdale; some Manchester tradesmen, a Birmingham Quaker, an American traveller, a Portuguese who had been secretary to Canning when he was English ambassador at Lisbon, and a land-agent of the Earl of Derby. The overworked business men were eager for the pleasure of the fresh, vigorous, and highly vitalised sea air, and the glimpses of Welsh headlands, Welsh sands, Welsh bays, and Welsh mountains.

On rounding the Black Rock, five miles from Liverpool, the tide began to flow, and the head wind settled into a strong and swelling gale. In the broader water, the steamer seemed to labour heavily, and to quiver like a frightened horse, every time a sea struck her full. Gradually, as the passengers grew sick and staggered to their cabins, a gloom fell over the vessel, and many began to listen with a sort of awe to the louder pulse of the engines, and the more angry wash of the waves, as the steamer reeled and struggled on, in a scared, confused sort of way, past the Floating Light, fifteen miles from the great Lancashire city. Dinner was served up in the cabin at three o'clock. The captain lingered long at dinner, and drank more than a good officer with a dangerous and uncertain night before him should have done. Frightened women began to ask anxiously, "When shall we reach Beaumaris?" Pale fathers and husbands only shook their heads and looked anxiously to windward.

Mr. Tarrey, a land-agent, called down the cabin stairs:

"Captain, there seems to be a great deal of danger. I wish you would turn back."

Atkinson shouted back, "There's a deal of

fear, but no danger. It's folly to go back; you'll only have the same ground to go over again."

The gentlemen in the cabin, good sailors who were able to enjoy their meal, laughed with the surly captain at the frightened landmen on deck. He then complimented two pretty girls who had remained in the cabin on their seamanship. By this time the mate had also taken more than his share of grog, and as two of the steamer's crew had been left at Bangor on the last voyage, there were only two flushed men left to work the crazy vessel. A second request was then made by those on deck, who saw what little way the steamer made, to put back to Liverpool while power still remained to do so.

The dogged captain, heedless of danger, replied mildly, "If we were to turn back with passengers, it would never do; we should have no profit."

On the confused vessel went, making very little way, her single engine beating feebly against a heavy and growing sea, much too near the land prudently to weather that great promontory of Denbighshire, the Great Ormshead. She should have been steered for the Menai Straits, with the wind fairly on her beam, her sails set in aid of the flagging steam.

A little after five, when the captain, heated and testy, returned on deck after two hours over his wine, a cluster of passengers came round him, and entreated him to return, all offering their fare, and others promising a gratuity in money. To one passenger he said, tauntingly, "One would suppose you had committed a murder, you are so frightened. I'm not one that turns back. If you knew me, you would not ask such a thing."

The sea was now forcing its way through the axles of the paddles, the engine fires were partly extinguished, and thus the steam power was reduced just when it was most needed. The cabin floors were also under water; the smeared and black-faced firemen were discussing the vessel in rather an ominous way; one said she was sixteen years old, and originally no better than a tea-chest. Old sailors had always prophesied she'd be the grave of some of them some day. Passengers are easily scared, but sailors' fears are presages.

Between six and seven the ebb tide made, and this, it was hoped, would help them on; but the vessel was more helpless than ever, going scarcely more than two miles an hour. The seams gaped wider, the engine fires grew duller as heavy seas poured down from the deck into the engine-room. The captain was down below, making evasive and contradictory answers.

"It's only the tail of a storm gone by, and there's no danger."

But at last came the confession so terrible to frightened passengers:

"I wish I could get somewhere to ride out the storm!"

All this time the lee shore was looming near. Driven landward by the wind and waves, the

Rothsay Castle had been these dreadful hours working painfully from the Hoyle sands at the mouth of the Dee, parallel to every bay and bight, till, about eight o'clock, she arrived off the Little Ormshead. From thence past the Great Ormshead (only four miles) took the wretched cranky vessel two hours; and the leakage increased as night came on. A sloop passed within a short distance, and two miles off there was good anchorage a mile from the shore; yet the infatuated captain neither signalled the sloop for help nor tried to anchor. The passage from Liverpool to Beaumaris is only fifty miles, and is generally done in six to seven hours; but this steamer had been eleven hours accomplishing thirty-six miles. The hold was now so full of water that it ran over into the cabin. The passengers began to work at the pumps in gangs, but the majority had given up all hope; for the leaks gained fast upon them, and the captain thought it dangerous to put into Conway, and had refused to push on to Penmaen, to anchor there sheltered by the Anglesea coast. The sky was at this time wild and cloudy, and through the driven clouds the moon seemed to race, often obscured and sometimes lost; and, through the sickly light, the precipice of the Great Ormshead was seen throwing its mighty shadow, blackening the mountainous waves.

The danger increased—yes, it was upon them now. The coals were drenched, and every time the furnace doors were opened the sea rushed in and dulled the fires. Eleven o'clock came, and the leaks were fast increasing. Nothing could now compose the women. The captain was in vain asked to hoist a lantern or fire a signal-gun; but he had neither gun nor lantern, and he never thought of blazing a tarred rope from the poop to bring out the Welsh fishermen.

At about a quarter to twelve land duskily gloomed on the larboard bow, and the sinking moon showed it to be Puffin Island, half a mile from Anglesea, and at the entrance of the Menai Straits. A cry of joy greeted it from the deck, for it seemed an omen of safety. There was hope now; but two of the engine-room fires were extinguished. The pumps had become blocked with ashes from the furnaces, and were useless. A brave passenger called out for buckets to bale with, but the only bucket on board had just dropped overboard. The same energetic man proposed to bale with hats, but the expedient seemed inadequate, and no one joined him in it. Now was a crisis indeed. The tide had turned, the water was getting shallow; the place was dangerous at night without constant sounding. The captain should have used his sails, or have anchored and made signals of distress; but he remained down below.

There were shoals everywhere before the vessel; the spot was indeed the very Dardanelles of the voyage, and required incessant care even for a good ship and by sunlight. Beaumaris Bay opened to the north; at the eastern entrance to it frowned the Great Ormshead, and on the west stretched the coast of Anglesea and

the great rocks of Penmaenmawr. Ten miles of sea rolled between these two gateways of the bay. To the north spread that vast graveyard of ships, the Lavan sands. The vessel's course lay up the straits leading past Beaumaris to Caernarvon and the Irish Sea. The north-east point of the dreaded Lavan sands is named (from some wreck centuries ago) the Dutchman's Bank, between which and an outlying insular shoal called the Spit there is the Wash, a very narrow channel. In the open sea the Rothsay Castle was a mere bundle of driftwood; what would it be when surrounded by shoals, and picking its way down mere lanes of deep water, with death on either side?

A little past midnight the end began. The ship had dragged along the eastern edge of the Dutchman's Bank, and, in endeavouring to recover her course, jammed on the Spit sand, stern foremost. Five minutes before, the helmsman had grimly and silently touched Mr. Broadhurst, a passenger, on the shoulder, and pointed out breakers whitening a hundred yards to larboard.

The first shock was alarming, but was not violent—a mere grating thump. Few passengers were on deck. With the second concussion there came a heavy crash as if the vessel was breaking up bodily. Then came shrieks from the women, and all in the cabin, sick or well, rushed to the stairs and struggled to reach the deck. One of the passengers saw the nails of the ship's timbers partially drawn out by the shock, and at once decided that all was lost. A Liverpool branch pilot, unnoticed before, and who had been drinking with the steward and sleeping in some hole forward, now came among the passengers, and exclaimed:

"We are all lost!"

That drove the women to absolute frenzy. Some, however, still maintained that it was only the paddle-wheel which had broken, and all would soon be well. The captain gave violent, confused, and contradictory orders. He ordered the helm "hard a-starboard," which would have driven the vessel further into the sands. The man at the helm, however, seeing the danger, thought right to port the helm; but the captain sent the mate angrily, and he took the wheel and put it a-starboard, as if determined to lose the vessel at once. The gentlemen passengers were then ordered to go first forward and then aft, in order to try and float the vessel. The paddles were ordered to be reversed, but the steam was too low to work them. Those on deck who heard these proofs of the captain's ignorance of the long-existing danger now lost all hope. The vessel was fast filling. Some persons entreated the captain to let go the anchor, and keep the vessel from driving, as the sands would soon be covered with deep water, and assistance might then arrive. His answer was:

"Hold your bother; there's no danger."

Once more the vessel was washed off it, cleared the sand, but struck again. Then she dragged herself, like a wounded, delirious crea-

ture, a mile along the bank, rolling, pitching, and bumping, till she came within two hundred yards of the Swash Channel. There the doomed wreck beat again on the sand, and lay helpless, with no motion of her own, no struggle left in her, clogged by the fatal indraught, staked to the sand by the dead weight of the lifeless engine, and ready to pour out her hecatombs of victims to man's insatiable enemy, the sea. At that last death-blow every one rushed from below. Some of the ladies remained locked in each other's arms, some tore their dress or threw away their caps and bonnets, others swooned or dashed themselves on the deck in a delirious and passionate paroxysm of terror. Many were hugging their children in the agony of parting; husbands and wives were taking leave of each other, or avowing their determination to die together. The infatuated captain still had, or pretended to have, hope. He ordered the jib to be hoisted, to wear the vessel's head round towards the Swash. He cried out that there was no danger, it was only sand she was on; she would soon float again; she was all right; she was on her way to Beaumaris.

Mr. Foster was now asked, by request of the passengers, if he would allow his carriage to be thrown overboard; he at once consented; but while some property of value was being removed from it, the captain interfered, giving it as his opinion that the weight was rather beneficial than otherwise to the wreck. The captain was then asked to let the bell be rung to alarm Beaumaris. He said:

"If they wanted it rung, they might ring it themselves."

The bell was rung till the tongue was broken; then it was beaten with a piece of wood and with bits of coal. At this crisis a seaman deliberately took out the binnacle lamp and broke it into pieces on the deck. The captain, at last aroused, was trying the depth of the water alongside with a pole, and found it to be seven feet.

The wreck now dashed about in its death-gasp. The stays of the ponderous chimney had long ago given way, but had been secured again by the crew and passengers. They soon again yielded to the rocky strain, and the loosened tube swung to and fro, threatening to sweep away all in its fatal neighbourhood. At last it fell, tearing away the mainmast, and both struck across the poop and starboard quarter with hideous crashes that sounded like the roar of a sundered iceberg. The bulwarks on the side of the fall were shattered into fragments. It is supposed the captain and mate both perished at this time, as they were never seen again on deck. The passengers were now praying, alone or in groups. The crew were carefully watched to see what they would do, but they, too, were all but hopeless. Three lashed themselves to the top of the foremast, some stripped and prepared for swimming, others tried to collect materials for rafts. Two men got hold of a big drum, but there was a discussion about their

inequality of size. Both men perished, and the drum was afterwards seen, burst and abandoned to the waves. Some of the passengers, in paroxysms of irresolution and terror, moved restlessly from place to place. Mr. Tarrey, whose wife and five children were on board, at first agitated, had now grown calm, resolute, and resigned. He said:

"To return without my family would be worse than death. Yes, I will die with them."

The storm was now increasing, the moon had gone down, a solitary star in the black vault above and the phosphorescence of the turbulent sea were the only light. Many persons clung to the iron under the plank that passes from one paddle-box to another. The windlass and the belfry were also seized with avidity as points of resistance to the waves. Hughes, one of the seamen on the foremast, let go his child's hand when he began to climb, and the boy (a fine fellow of about twelve) sobbed and shrieked, "Father, father, save me!" But in vain; despair has no heart. In the midst of all this horror, however, one poor woman, a carpenter's wife, seemed to entirely forget herself, and was absorbed in her anxiety for an infant at her breast.

There had been a rush to the ship's boat, till a sailor called out that there were no oars, and that there was a hole in the bottom of it. The boat then broke away at one end, and hung by the other. The carpenter's wife, who still clung to it, was rescued by some of the passengers. This poor loving mother instantly begged a gentleman near her to wrap her shawl closer round her to prevent the water touching the child. Even when she sank a short time afterwards, she was seen holding the child up above the waves, careless of all but that.

While Mr. Selwyn and other passengers were praying, some one exclaimed:

"There's a light on Puffin Island!"

Everybody at once sprang to their feet and shouted; but when no answer came but the impatient roar of the sea, some returned to their prayers, others wept, and many agonised each other by mutual accusations as to who had prompted the fatal voyage.

And now came the climax of horror. The ship began to part, and the two trembling masts leant one way, the stern the other. A tremendous wave rolled and leaped over the vessel, striking and splitting and washing away to leeward. The frightened crowd clung together. There was a deathlike silence. Their heads almost touched the water. Their collective weight broke away railings and stanchions, benches and bulwarks, and they all passed into the yawning sea. There was one deep-drawn sigh, one spasmodic, choking, simultaneous gasp; they struggled and writhed in a whirlpool, and then sank.

A side plank first yawned open, and then the deck sank to the level of the sea. Another wave succeeded this. Mr. Tinne says he then found himself on the mast, with the steward, his wife, and, he thinks, a child. The steward's wife was

exhausted, and her husband was trying to encourage her. Mr. Tinne then left the mast, and swam to some other spars on which were two persons. He could see a raft in the distance with eight or nine persons on it. Stunned for a moment by floating pieces of wreck, Mr. Tinne dived every time a drift approached, and cautioned his companions to do the same. Presently a vast mass rolled over him, and when he again looked up he was alone. A little girl named Tarrey, whose family had already been drowned, was seen tossed about the quarter-deck, repeatedly dashed against the gunwale, and then sucked back by the waves to be again beaten and tossed. She kept crying piteously: "Oh! won't you come to me, father? Oh, mamma!" till she was washed away.

A Mr. Nuttall, who also fell when the bulwark gave way, weary of suffering, reclined his head on the water, and waited to sink. At that moment the side of the packet came floating by, and he succeeded in getting on it and resting on his knees. While doing this, the little boy the seaman had forsaken caught hold of him, and mounted on his back with the inexorable clutch of despair. Mr. Nuttall, unable to swim, heavily clad, and thus encumbered, did not abandon hope. By dint of a rope washed near him, he contrived to get to the poop, and place the boy within reach of the wheel. Just then he heard a cry, and looking over the side of the wreck saw a woman clinging. She was trying to climb, but seemed about to fall back into the sea. He caught her by her hair, which was loose to the wind. He then got a firmer hold, and dragged her up on the poop. Another person then drew her to the wheel, and broke her bonnet-strings, her bonnet being full of water and nearly choking her. They then rescued a Mr. Coxhead, who had been hanging for a quarter of an hour to some ropes at the stern, dashed against the vessel with every sea. They kept his head from the water, which was knee-deep on the raft; but he seemed to be dying. Every wave now washed one or more survivors from the poop. The platform on which the wheel was soon sank into the water, fastened only by cordage, which the Liverpool pilot and six other survivors severed. They then floated clear. There were on this raft, only three square yards wide, a lady, four gentlemen, the pilot, and the sailor's son.

While all this was passing in the stern, there were terrible scenes also in other parts of the vessel. A musician and another man clambered into the dickey of Mr. Forster's carriage. They were opposing a third man, who had just got a seat, when a wave swept the carriage into the sea. The last comer, a Mr. Hammond, got astride of a plank, which was, however, instantly seized by another drowning man. For half an hour these two men silently struggled for the plank, the success of the one always unseating the other. The second man at last grew worn-out, fainted, fell off the plank, and was seen no more. Mr. Hammond then re-

sumed his seat, and floated safely till day-break.

Mr. Lawrence Duckworth has left a vivid picture of the horrors of that night. He and some fifty others still clung to the wreck, and, before one by one died and dropped away, his ear grew so familiar with the awful indications of death under such circumstances, that he knew when the fatal moment was approaching. "There was," he observes, "a hissing sound made by their lengthened gasps, which became more and more laborious, and ended in a short convulsion. The body became quickly rigid, and the clutch of the hands was more unyielding than in life." An old man died first, and the waves took him off his feet. He had hold of the binnacle and of Mr. Duckworth. This threatened to involve Mr. Duckworth in the fate of the old man, for the additional distress which such a burden occasioned was very severe; and it was not without great difficulty that he at length shook him off—or, rather, tore him away—for the portion of Mr. Duckworth's clothes, by which he held when living, was retained in his lifeless grasp. Mr. Foster's servant was the next victim, and Mr. Duckworth was reduced to the painful necessity of using similar means to disencumber himself of the body. The man above him, too, after a struggle of amazing duration, considering the ceaseless exertion which his trying situation required, died in the same horrible manner as the unhappy beings just described; and, as with them, his hands retained the grapple which had been strongly put forth in the pangs of death, and it was some time before the waves tore him from the rope and freed Mr. Duckworth from the horror and danger of frequent and violent contact with the body.

One by one the survivors were taken away, till only Mr. Duckworth and the three sailors on the mast were left. Dreading the rising tide, Duckworth called to them to fling him a rope that he might raise himself; but they refused, and in a few minutes an immense sea broke over the wreck, with a force which threatened at once to shatter it to atoms. On partially recovering from this terrible shock, Mr. Duckworth saw that the mast was gone. It had been swept away to some distance from the wreck, to which, however, it was attached by some ropes, and the three men were still fastened to the places they occupied when the spar was erect.

Twice only during the night Duckworth felt hopeless; first, when his wife was torn from him; then, when the mast fell and left him alone. But the prevailing impression upon his mind during so many hours of trial was, that he should eventually be saved; and this impression, it seems, which no doubt instrumentally contributed to save him, had been made by a dream he had the night before he embarked in the *Rothsay Castle*. "This dream," says Mr. Duckworth, "which I thought nothing of when I arose from the slumber in which it was presented, occurred to me from time to time while I was upon the wreck; it forced itself

upon my recollection when my companions were dropping on every side of me into the sea:

Methought the billows spoke, and told me of it;
The winds did sing it to me.

It was with me when I was alone—when I seemed, indeed, shut out from the living and engulfed by surrounding waters. I thought still of my dream, and gave it literal interpretation, believing it sent by Providence to afford me a sustaining assurance of protection and ultimate deliverance from peril."

Nearly half an hour after the foremast fell, Mr. Duckworth's heart leaped for joy to see a boat near Penmaen Point. His eyes were on it; she was steering for the Sound! No, thank God, it was for the wreck. Duckworth then shouted to the men on the mast to keep up their spirits. It afterwards appeared that, about five o'clock, a pilot on Penmaen Point had seen through his glass what he considered was a fishing-vessel trolling over the Dutchman's Bank, towards Conway Bay. It surprised him, however; he looked keener, and saw it was a mast with men clinging to it. The mast fell five minutes after; had he looked those few minutes later, the four men would have been lost. Two other pilots then joined him, launched a boat and bore down the two miles to the wreck. They were astonished at Duckworth's escape, and with difficulty got him into the boat; the three sailors were found in a knot, with their arms laced for united warmth and protection. Believing all the rest had perished, the boat steered for Beaumaris; near this place the pilot picked up Mr. Tinne insensible, but holding tightly to a spar.

In the mean time the poop-deck raft was overcrowded, and there was a fear that it would sink. Mr. Coxhead had recovered consciousness in time to see eight or nine persons drop off one after the other from the mainmast, and a Mr. Hammond was rescued and drawn upon the raft after some objections for fear of overcrowding. They then paddled the raft towards Conway, and Miss Whitehead, almost naked as she was, lent her white petticoat, for the double purpose of sail and signal. Two men held up this, while four others worked at the paddles. The Penmaen boat did not see them, but they had hope now, for they could see the smoke of houses and discern people walking in the Caernarvonshire fields. Presently a life-boat pushed out of Beaumaris. Mr. Walker, a young collegian, had seen them through a telescope from Beaumaris-green.

"Help the lady first," was the sailors' cry. They placed her in the boat, wrapped in their jackets. Mr. Whitehead was nearly dead, so he was lifted in next. The first exclamation of one of the life-boat men, when he heard the wreck was the wreck of the *Rothsay Castle*, was:

"I knew this would be the end of her; I left her last week on that account."

The bodies, as they were washed on shore, were placed in the Shire-hall, till they could be

claimed and removed for interment. Twenty only had been saved out of the gay, light-hearted one hundred and fifty that had started from Liverpool.

The loss of this steamer caused a profound sensation through Lancashire and a great part of Wales. It led to greater precautions against wreck being taken on board the Mersey steamers, and several worn-out boats were removed before government could examine and condemn them. In August, 1832, the *Eisteddfod*, or meeting of the Welsh bards, was held in Beaumaris, and the Duchess of Kent and the Princess Victoria awarded the prizes. The chief medal was given for the best ode on the wreck of the *Rothsay Castle*. The duchess and princess also visited the spot upon which the steamer was lost, and took a great interest in the catastrophe. Many wrecks have involved greater loss of life, but no wreck of the last century has, perhaps, been described more fully, or from more points of view, sixteen educated survivors having written their fullest recollections of their various modes of escape.

INFLUENCE OF TASSO ON MILTON AND SPENSER.

MILTON has been accused by more than one Italian writer of having taken an Italian poem, published in the year 1590, as the groundwork of his *Paradise Lost*. The name of that poem is *The Angeleida*; the author, Erasmus di Valvazone. Maffei unhesitatingly asserts that Milton borrowed from it. The *Angeleida* consists of three cantos, in which the contest between the good and the fallen angels is described. We know that Milton was a good Italian scholar, and that he visited Florence, Rome, and Naples, about the year 1639. The first edition of the *Paradise Lost* was published in London in the year 1667. Maffei says:

"It has been most reasonably supposed by critics that Milton turned the *Angeleida* to account to weave (per tissere) his *Paradise Lost*, and certainly in the arrangement and disposal of his plot there is great similitude between these two poets; the language used by the leaders of the adverse factions, and the idea of a regular battle with various chances, especially the quaint idea of making the rebel angels use artillery, which is the case in both poems, make us suspect that Milton must have seen the *Angeleida*."

Hallam makes no mention of the *Angeleida*. He says, respecting Milton: "In the numerous imitations, and still more traces of elder poetry which we perceive in *Paradise Lost*, it must be always kept in mind that he had only his recollection to rely upon. His blindness seems to have been complete before 1654; and I scarcely think that he had begun his poem before the anxiety and trouble into which the public strife of the Commonwealth and of the Restoration had thrown him gave leisure for immortal occupations. Then the remembrance of early reading came over his dark and lonely path like the

moon emerging from the clouds. Then it was that the muse was truly his; not only as she poured her native inspiration into his mind, but as the daughter of memory, coming with fragments of ancient melodies, the voice of Euripides, Homer, and Tasso." We have in vain looked through Sismondi and Guinguené for some mention of the *Angeleida*. The influence of Tasso upon Milton, on the other hand, is undeniable. He occupied the same rooms, formerly the dwelling of the Italian poet, at the house of Manso, Marquis de Villa, at Naples. Manso wrote a life of Tasso, to which Milton alludes in his poem *Mansus*:

*Describis vitam, moresque et dona Minervæ
Æmulus illius, Mycalen qui natus ad altam
Rettulit Æoli vitam sacundus Homeri.*

Black, in his preface to his *Life of Tasso*, makes the following trite observations: "The *Life of Tasso* is worthy of a long detail, not merely on account of his own eminence, but from the influence of his writings on the best of our own bards. Even to literary men, the Italian language is, in general, not, like the French, quite familiar; and, in spite of all that has been effected, much still remains to be done, before we shall have become sufficiently acquainted with the masters of the fathers of our poetry; yet, till this be done, we shall have but a comparatively imperfect notion of the noblest production of English literature."

The influence of Tasso upon Milton is a subject for much interesting investigation. Manso was a warm admirer of Tasso, and doubtless, extolled his merits. The imagination of our great bard may have been fired by the fame achieved by the Italian poet. Whilst a guest in Manso's house, Tasso, at the request of his host's mother, commenced an epic poem, scarcely known in England, entitled *The Creation*. His aim was to sing in exalted verse the wonders of the seven days. In the fourth canto of the *Jerusalem Delivered*, Satan invokes a council to concert measures to help the infidels against the Christians. If we turn to the second book of *Paradise Lost*, we find a description of a council held by Satan. A comparison of the two is interesting.

In the ninth canto of *Jerusalem Delivered*, Tasso soars to the most daring description. When the battle between the Christians and Pagans is at its height, but undecided, the Creator sends for the Archangel Michael, and orders him to disperse the evil spirits who favour the infidels. Milton's description of the Deity, in the third book of *Paradise Lost*, is very similar. Dante shrank from describing the Almighty. Led by Beatrice, he is allowed a glimpse of the great mystery of the hypostatical union of Christ's human nature with his divine being. Spenser is supposed to have borrowed largely from Tasso; but it may with equal justice be said, that Ariosto and Tasso borrowed from Homer and Virgil. In addition to the *Jerusalem Delivered*, Tasso wrote a poem entitled *Rinaldo*. The Valley of Despair, in the eleventh canto of Torquato's work, bears a re-

markable similarity to the story of the Red-Cross Knight. The Lion tamed by Clarillo, killed by Rinaldo, reminds us of the Lion attending upon Una, slain by Sansloy.

We do not endorse all the Italian critic says respecting the origin of the *Paradise Lost*; but there can be no doubt that not only the Jerusalem, but also the Amadis of Gaul of Bernardo Tasso, and the Orlando Furioso of Ariosto, exercised considerable influence upon the mind of our great epic poets.

GUESS!

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

"UGH! my native climate, what a Beast you are!"

Edward Pringleston had just crossed the Channel. He was twenty-four years old, and the son of a Leicestershire county-court judge.

It is often thought to be a good thing that the eldest of a large family should be a girl, and he trained from infancy to act as a deputy slave-driver. But Mrs. Pringleston never regretted the sex of *her* eldest child, "Edward always was *such* a good boy." When he went to school there was a very sensible increase of noise from the nursery department, and for the first time Mr. and Mrs. Pringleston began to think that perhaps they had incurred a troublesome responsibility in having ten children. At school Edward was regarded as "the steady boy" by the authorities, and as "a grind" by his companions. No one took any liberties with him, however, and not one single scrape occurred to trouble the parental ears. Of the many home conferences held over his career, "Edward was sure to do well," was the invariable and, if vague, very comfortable result.

But with a high degree at Oxford, Edward seemed to have exhausted his energies for the time being. He showed no special inclination for any pursuit. He did not care for the law, so the elder Pringleston's interest was exerted in favour of the younger boys; and, indeed, the judge was very well content that Edward should rest on his oars for the present. There was no necessity for immediate decision, as he himself was a hale man of fifty-five, and good for many years. Besides, there could be no anxiety about the ultimate success of a first-class man. The judge had been no scholar himself, and reposed an undue confidence in the might of learning. And then Edward had rather overworked himself at Oxford, and felt he had honourably earned the right of resting.

But, somehow, he was low spirited, and his mother grew anxious. The family-doctor said, "Send him to Paris for a fortnight." Mrs. Pringleston objected that it was so cold, travelling in January; but she was not listened to, and Edward went to Paris. And perhaps it was as good a sign as his friends could have desired of his having enjoyed his trip, that he made that unconvincing remark about the climate as he got into the train at Folkstone at half-past eight o'clock A.M.

It had been trying to snow all night, and also trying to thaw. The result was mud by the ton, universal damp, and universal ill temper.

As Edward Pringleston got into a carriage with a large balance of sickness still in hand, wet through with the January seas and snows, and turned a mottled face towards the window where the dirty down train was faintly visible through the steamed glass, he felt, indeed, that his cup of misery was full. The entrance of a widow and a little girl about two years old caused it to overflow.

He established himself next to the furthest door, and erected a fortification of shawls, bags, and a deal box marked "Fragile," containing a clock from the Palais Royal (a purchase he had since heartily regretted), between himself and the intruders. Go to sleep he *must*, so up went his feet into the opposite seat, and in five minutes he was in "paradise."

But he was a light sleeper, and very soon became aware that his companions were holding a conference in whispers.

"Baby will look out of that window, mamma," said a small but energetic voice.

"No, no, darling!" said mamma; "it will wake the gentleman. The poor tired gentleman, baby! Look out of this window, dear. You can see the pretty snow out of this one."

But baby was not to be so deluded.

"Baby can see the snow out of the other, too," she said; and the little wilful mortal ran away from her mother, and, using the sacred deal box as a step, actually mounted on to the bridge formed by the stranger's legs to get a better view of the prospect.

Edward did not in the least care to be thought extraordinarily polite and good natured. It gave him no pleasure to make sacrifices, and he was quite satisfied with knowing privately that he was as ready to make one if it were necessary as any one else. His very gallantry was a measured thing. He would give up his seat to a lady, but so he would to a gentleman if he were tired. On the present occasion he was outraged, and turned his head towards the mother in resentment. She was young, scarcely older than himself; and she was pretty, too, but it made no difference to him. It was a clear case of injustice.

"Baby, baby, come down, darling!" cried mamma; "please excuse her, sir. She has been very much indulged, and she doesn't understand that she is not to worry strangers."

All this time Edward had been considering the small person on his legs. She was very tiny, very plump, and had that perfect shapelessness which is so delightful in a child. Her arms had still the infantine creases at the wrists and elbows, and she frequently examined her marvellous little hands and pointed nails, displaying great anxiety about their cleanliness. She had a roguish mouth, which she often pursed up persuasively, and a pair of romantic blue eyes, which had, comically enough, an expression of the deepest pathos.

The result of Edward's investigation was this answer to the lady:

"Oh, never mind her! She doesn't inconvenience me. Let her stay if she likes."

As she evidently did like, her mother let her stay.

Edward had now to undergo a complete examination. His waistcoat-buttons were counted, his cravat was untied, and his collars were turned down. Then the little intruder betook herself to his face, and poked her small fingers into every corner. She took hold of his eyelashes to open and shut his eyes, and arranged his hair in a very novel style. And he actually smiled at these indignities, for he found it very pleasant to have that absorbed little face so near his, and those marvellously soft little fingers touching him so lightly. She tired of the amusement sooner than he did, and presently began to clamour for her "paints."

It seemed she was a great hand at the fine arts, and Edward was obliged to get out at the next station to procure some water to moisten the said paints, and a copy of the Illustrated London News on which to exercise her skill in the art of colouring. The pictures of ships and public buildings were soon disposed of. She adopted a very broad style with them. Some of her paints she held in greater estimation than the rest, and these were not employed unless the picture were a favourite. Others were considered very ordinary tints, and were generally dashed all over uninteresting subjects without the slightest reference to nature. The Governor-General of India was painted a deep blue; and a meeting at Exeter Hall a brilliant yellow; but "the Paris Fashions for January," represented by three or four surprised-looking ladies and an elderly child, required the artist's grave consideration. She finally consulted Edward.

"What's that?" she inquired, pointing to one of them.

"That's a lady," said Edward; "give her a green gown. Hallo! that's going on to her fingers." And he put out his hand to guide the too-busy pencil.

"What's that?" said she again.

"That's her bonnet. Let's make that red."

"Where's the red?"

"Here it is. Now then. Black hair, here's the black. And now her face. Rosy cheeks."

"Where's the rosy?" the small person asked again; and, having been shown it, she went on with a vigour that did not promise a long continuance of her exertions. And, indeed, a sudden pause very soon took place. Baby was getting very much bored.

At this point mamma began to fumble in a bag. Edward had long felt impelled to open his bag, and now he could no longer resist doing so. In that bag was one of Boissier's masterpieces—a lovely bonbonnière which he was carrying home to his own little sisters. Poor little sisters! they were obliged to content themselves with British "goodies;" but he could not regret his gift when he saw how tightly it was held by its new possessor; and her little face, nodding to him out of a cab window, became one of those memories which

we stow away for years, ready to bring out and lovingly pore over, again and again.

CHAPTER II.

EDWARD's fellow-traveller, Mrs. Stalman, was the widow of the Rev. Allan Stalman, vicar of Spikehurst, Kent. She was of a good family, though a very poor one, and, the Rev. Allan having nothing but his country living worth two hundred pounds a year, she had been well accustomed to poverty all her life. She had met her husband in Malta, where her father's regiment was quartered, and that small place had had a good gossip over the astounding news that she had declined to marry her cousin, John Tustin, the richest prize in the place, for the sake of a poor chaplain.

She had been very happy with the poor chaplain, and did not trouble herself much about John Tustin, who had parted from her in anger. He had gone to India she knew, and was reported to be leading a gay life there, and to be gaining rapid promotion.

The Rev. Allan Stalman died. Every one in Spikehurst was very kind to his widow, but Spikehurst was not a large place, and she could not live on kind words alone. Nor, had she any idea of living on the bounty of others. Consequently, Mrs. Stalman roused herself in her deep affliction, and, instead of posing in the eyes of Spikehurst as a desolate widow with a fatherless child, proceeded to realise her possessions, and travelled up to London with a modest wardrobe and three hundred pounds in money.

She had been a great musical performer in the Malta days, and had managed to keep her powers tolerably unimpaired, even in the unappreciative circles at Spikehurst. She was so fortunate as to obtain the post of musical teacher in two good schools near London, and that of organist in a church. An old friend, who was much in her own plight (minus the three hundred pounds), was glad to join with her in renting a small house, which offered "Apartments for a Single Gentleman;" and thus Mrs. Stalman managed to live in great respectability.

In London, six years had passed more rapidly over Mrs. Stalman's head than they had over Edward Pringle's. With him, that time had dragged itself away in unsettled purposelessness. He had seen the usual incidents that occur in a large family, grow and develop. One of the boys had gone to sea; another, first to the bad and then to Australia. Most of the boys had got into debt a little, but had repented and were now doing well. And then his eldest sister, who was to have made the grand match to my Lord Sharklin, was met at the very church door by the genuine peer, and saw her impostor bridegroom shrink away, never to return.

In all these troubles, Edward's clear head was in constant requisition. A fellowship at Oxford had procured him independence, and what wonder if, in the midst of all these difficulties, he had reached his thirtieth year without making any mark?

At that time, came that break which is often

the first great shock in a family. Mr. Pringle-son's death was sudden. He had sat in his little court and discharged his usual duty, and next day that court had no judge. Our Oxford fellow could not now indulge in dreams. The father was dead, and the mother must be kept! Thus it was that he came to London to fill a mastership at Duke's College, and, looking out for lodgings, knocked at Mrs. Stalman's door. As it was one of his school-days, he concluded all arrangements, and had actually been three days in possession of his rooms without being aware of his landlady's identity.

He was sitting at his breakfast one morning, when he heard a regular and peculiar noise on the stairs outside. While puzzling over it, a voice called from below:

"Miss Laura! That ain't you a-battledoring and shuttlecocking again, is it? And after all your ma said, and you know you oughtn't to it. Come down directly, miss!"

The voice had become louder as its owner ascended the stairs, and now there followed a sharp sound and a cry of distress. Miss Laura was receiving manual correction.

Edward opened his door in a hurry.

"What are you beating that child for?" he said to the aggressor, who was a very grimy servant.

"Why, sir, she's been told 'undreds of times she ain't to make that noise, but it ain't of no use. She won't mind one bit."

"Do you suppose knocking her about will do any good?" said Edward, whose eyes were angrily observing a red mark on the child's wrist where the servant had clutched her, and a black smear on the back of her hand inflicted by a blacking-brush. Taking out his handkerchief to remove this smear, he noticed the hand, which was peculiar, more closely. He looked at the child, and with a sudden exclamation drew her into his room and shut the door.

This unexpected move rather astonished her, and though she looked Edward straight in the eyes with a defiant air, there were certain little signs that she was not altogether easy in her mind. Edward had by this time satisfied himself that his little heroine of the train stood before him. His first remark was highly diplomatic, intended to elicit a final proof, and also to introduce a pleasing subject.

"Do you like sugar-plums *now*?" he asked.

It was a complete success. The child had a very pliant and expressive figure. In an instant its defiant rigidity disappeared, and she approached a thought nearer, before answering "Yes," in a shy whisper.

Edward sat down by the fire, and she leaned against one of his knees.

"Now," said he, "if I were to find some sugar-plums what would you do?"

She was a practical person, and so inquired:

"If you was to find them for me?"

"Yes, for you. What would you do with them?"

"Give mamma some, and Miss Price some, and me some."

That evening Mrs. Stalman received a message

from her new lodger begging to see her. This ending in an invitation from Mrs. Stalman to tea, Mr. Pringle-son came down to her room with a packet in his hand. The fellow-travellers recognised each other at once, and Laura was sent to find the identical bonbonnière, which had been carefully preserved. Edward's packet soon refilled it, and for the second time it became a bond of friendship.

Laura was now eight years old, and beginning to be a care to her mother.

"What *am* I to do about her, Mr. Pringle-son?" she asked, one evening; "she is beginning to get a big girl now, and her education ought to be attended to. She spells shockingly, and I fear she never will write well. I cannot spare time to teach her, if I were able, and yet I don't like schools. *What* shall I do?"

Edward was really younger than Mrs. Stalman, but she was beginning to look up to him as family umpire.

"Don't send her to school," he answered.

"You think not? But how else she is to learn anything, I don't know. Poor Eliza Price has enough on her hands, looking after the house, besides being no great scholar, I am quite sure Laura would never mind a word from her."

It was a difficult question. Edward Pringle-son was engaged in looking over a pile of examination-papers. The particular note-book under his scrutiny required much revision. Its owner, who wrote an untidy sprawling hand, and signed his name with irritating illegibility as "W. Payne Shepherd," gave the master great trouble. Edward again and again shook his head over Shepherd's note-book, and scored it with marks of displeasure. It was a busy time; as the examinations were coming on, he could give no further attention for the moment to Laura and her education. At the end of the term he hurried out of town for rest and to see his mother, and returned in a week to make out the boys' reports. It had become a habit with him now to frequently join the circle down-stairs in the evening, and even to take his work there with him. His first evening was so passed.

"Where's Laura?" he inquired at once.

"Ah, poor Laura!" sighed mamma, "I shall never forget her sorrowful little face as she went away! I have been obliged to act without consulting you, as I should have liked, Mr. Pringle-son. But time pressed. Mrs. Welling, the wife of my dear Allan's successor in the Spikehurst living, is really a very nice person, and, on hearing of my difficulties, wrote in the kindest manner and offered to take Laura as a pupil. She has no children of her own, and, as they are not well off, will be glad of both salary and occupation. You don't look pleased, Mr. Pringle-son! I hope you don't disapprove of what I have done?"

"Oh dear no. Of course you have the first right over the little woman, and no doubt you have done the best for her."

"Oh, but dear me!" cried the widow, who was very accessible to doubts, "I should be

quite uncomfortable if I thought you were dissatisfied. And, of course, you are such a judge of tuition! But, you see, I was obliged to decide, for Mrs. Welling could only give me three days, and at the very last moment I wrote and said the child should go."

"Pray don't apologise, Mrs. Stalman," said Edward, half laughing, "for disposing of your own child. Little folks must learn to spell, I suppose."

He did not look at all happy, however, and W. Payne Shepherd's report coming under his consideration, received no mercy.

CHAPTER III.

"PRINGLESON! You in an omnibus! I thought you would as soon have thought of wearing a wide-awake in London, as foregoing your Saturday afternoon's walk."

The omnibus was going past the Temple gate, and the speaker had emerged from that portal, and now took a seat beside his friend.

"Ah!" answered Mr. Pringleson, "I have been doing a more extraordinary thing than riding in an omnibus. What do you think of my having been to take stalls for this new piece at the Lyceum?"

"My dear Pringleson! Have you come into a fortune?"

"No," said Mr. Pringleson, with rather a perplexed look, out into Chancery-lane, up which they were passing; "but my landlady's daughter has just come home for good, and I am redeeming an old promise. It feels rather odd, though."

"Oh! You are getting a young fellow at last! It really is time you gave way to a little rashness. Why, dear me, I can remember when you first went to Duke's College, and had those boys in one of the low classes, you were like a fellow of fifty-five. Yet you couldn't have been very old, for I consider you a young man now."

"Ah, my dear fellow! I met a man to-day who made me feel rather old, though. At that very time you speak of, there was a boy in my class named Shepherd—a lazy young dog, too, who gave me endless trouble. Well, a card was brought to me as I was preparing to leave this afternoon, with 'Mr. W. Payne Shepherd' on it, and in came this identical fellow. I shouldn't have known him. He has shot up far above me—and I am not a short man—and has a great moustache with long waxed points to it; a thing I hate. He was exceedingly civil, but he had not been talking to me three minutes before I should have liked to box his ears. Odd antipathies one takes, to be sure!"

When Mr. Pringleson sat by the fire opposite Mrs. Stalman, waiting for dinner that evening, he forgot his odd antipathies; and the look of loving pride which overspread the mother's face was reflected in his as they both watched Laura.

Her tall straight figure looked wonderfully graceful as she stood with her back to them

before a pier-glass, trying the effect of a rose in her hair. Edward watched the hands that he knew so well. But they did not work altogether to their owner's satisfaction. He could see the reflexion of the face, with its distressed eyes and knitted brows, and in a few moments there was the unmistakable sound of a very small stamp.

"Bother!" she exclaimed deliberately, and then turning round with a defiant look, as if she dared remonstrance, said, "Mamma dear, I really can *not* make this thing do."

"Well, darling, put it away then," said indulgent mamma.

"Yes, dear; but what am I to say to dear old Price?"

Mamma, as usual, looked in an agony of doubt at this question; and, also as usual, referred to Edward.

"Poor Eliza Price gave her the rose, Mr. Pringleson, and it would be dreadful to hurt her feelings?"

"Well, Laura," answered the umpire, "it resolves itself into a question between your appearance and Miss Price's feelings; doesn't it?"

Laura blushed, and hurrying up to the looking-glass, desperately put the rose in her hair. Then she came and sat down on a low chair between her mother and friend. This last could not help reflecting that the misfitting rose did not prevent Laura from looking very lovely. Passing his hand over his forehead, which was getting bald now-a-days, he breathed a long sigh.

When they were seated in the theatre, Laura's absorption was complete, nor did her mother often take her eyes from the stage. The play was Ruy Blas, and at the most important points of the story, Laura's excitement was so great that she could not refrain from clutching Edward's arm. She was drinking in every word of the scene between Ruy Blas and the Queen in the council-chamber, when Edward, who had been fidgeting for some time, spoke in an energetic whisper:

"You had much better contrive to sit sideways, Laura. There is a current of air from the door, and if you can manage to inhale a little of it, it may correct this abominable atmosphere."

The idea of thinking of atmosphere or health when such much graver interests were at stake on the stage! Laura decidedly shifted her arm away from the entreating hand which had been laid on it, and looked hard at the stage with a very obstinate expression. When the act was over, Mr. Pringleson took a walk about the house to cool both body and mind. In the course of this walk he encountered one of the few friends he had preserved from early days: Mr. Goldridge, Q.C. Mr. Goldridge had lately married, as his second wife, a young lady under twenty. He insisted upon presenting Mr. Pringleson to his bride, who was in a private box. She had attracted considerable attention during the evening, and, from her elaborate toilet and tortured hair, Edward Pringleson had

several times turned to look complacently on the innocent simplicity of his own neighbour. They were left alone, and Mrs. Goldridge began to talk volubly.

"I have been so amused by a little drama over there, Mr. Pringleston"—indicating an opposite box so far from the stage that he had not before noticed its occupants. "That's Miss Royle and her mamma. A great beauty, you know, and a wonderful rider. Don't you know them?"

"No."

"Dear me! Everybody knows them—knows her, at all events. A dreadful flirt! They are very rich. Mr. Royle is the great banker, you know, and she is an only daughter. There is a young man named Shepherd—in a government office, I think—who is tremendously devoted, and the popular idea is, that if she cares for any one she cares for him. He is not in the box now; he went out just as you came in here, and I have been amused to observe how cross he has made her by staring at a very pretty girl in the stalls—with a rose in her hair—next to a vacant seat—do you see? third row?"

Mrs. Goldridge took great pains to point out Laura to Mr. Pringleston.

"Ah, yes!" said he, "she is next her mother, and they are with me. That vacant seat is mine."

Mrs. Goldridge looked a little confused at her mistake, but hurried on.

"Well, she is a very lovely girl, and more than one person has been looking at her, I assure you."

Mr. Pringleston's spirits were not raised by this announcement, and he soon afterwards left her.

Laura had quite forgotten that she had been offended, and greeted him with an inquiring smile.

"What lovely lady is that up there?"

"A bride," he answered. "A certain Mrs. Goldridge."

"A bride!" repeated both his companions in a breath; and the young lady appeared to gain great additional interest in their eyes, until the rising of the curtain again held them enchained.

"By-the-by!" exclaimed Laura, as they were taking tea on their return, "we never saw Mr. Goldridge. What is he like?"

"Mr. Goldridge, Q.C., is rather short, very fat, has grey hair and whiskers, wears spectacles, was a widower, and is sixty," responded Edward.

"You are laughing, Bluebeard," said Laura, addressing him by a name she had bestowed on him in her infancy.

"No, indeed! It's perfectly true. Why shouldn't it be?"

"A young girl marry a horrible old man!" said Laura.

"I did not say he was horrible, that I remember."

"But fat and sixty!" said she, with a shudder; "besides, he *must* be horrible to have married her."

"Perhaps she married him?" suggested Mr. Pringleston.

"Then *she* is horrible. She cannot like him. And then for him to marry again!"

"I don't see why people should not marry again if they like!" said Edward.

"Bluebeard! How dare you say such shocking things! Perhaps you will say next that people need not care for one another when they marry?"

"No," said he, meditatively; "I don't say that at all."

"Well, then," said she, triumphantly, "of course they can't care for more than one person, so they ought not to marry twice."

"You think people can't care for more than one person?" he inquired.

"Of course they can't," she answered, decisively.

Laura thought a good deal about the question after she went to bed that night, and became more convinced about it than ever. Edward thought of it too, and walking up to the looking-glass, contemplated himself for some time with a gloomy expression.

"Forty-two," he said to himself; and shook his head very gloomily indeed.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. PRINGLESTON wrought himself up to the pitch of making a formal call on Mrs. Goldridge.

The failure of Royle's bank had been rumoured, and Mrs. Goldridge entertained him with a repetition of her friends' comments on the subject. What would become of the family now? People said they were utterly ruined. Miss Royle had better have lowered her tone a little, and then, perhaps, she might have been comfortably settled by this time, instead of seeing all her old admirers drop off: as they inevitably would under the altered circumstances.

Mr. Pringleston had lately mused a great deal over the poverty of Mrs. Stalman and her daughter, and had often consulted with himself how it might be diminished. He had raised his own rent (in spite of their remonstrances), but had not achieved much in doing it. His visit to Mrs. Goldridge achieved more, by setting him thinking that, so long as his dear friends were in no distress, it was better they should keep out of a world composed of Royles and Goldridges.

On reaching home, he found the house in commotion and eager for his arrival. Mrs. Stalman had known no peace since the afternoon's post had brought a solicitor's letter, announcing the decease of Colonel Tustin, who had died unmarried in India, and had left the whole of his considerable property to his cousin, Mrs. Stalman, as a mark of his forgiveness and affection. There was not much sleep under that roof for the first night; neither was rest restored to some of its inmates for many a weary night to come.

Mr. Pringleston lay awake that night, and many nights afterwards. Why? Because he

had that day come to the knowledge that he was, and that he had been for a long time, in love with Laura Stalman.

To be in love for the first time in your life at the age of forty-two, and, moreover, to feel hopelessly too old for the person you love, is a very serious matter. Of course Mr. Pringleston knew that he could never marry Laura, and tried to be very philosophical about it. Perhaps he was so, but he failed to sleep the better for it.

The Stalmans were to set up a small house to begin with, in a very different kind of neighbourhood. "Poor Eliza Price," for the first time, seemed likely to deserve her name. She was to remain in the old place and go on letting the rooms, helped out by an allowance from her old friend. So *she* had one or two sleepless nights, and went about the house with red eyes.

"And what are *you* going to do, Bluebeard?" inquired Laura, one evening, as he came in from work and found her alone. "Go away while we move, I suppose?"

"No. Why should I go away? I may as well stay and see the last of you."

"The last of us! You are coming with us, are you not?"

"Coming with you? My dear child, I have been here as your lodger. You will take no lodger now. I shall keep my old quarters here and console Miss Price."

"Oh dear, oh dear! How dreadfully clear and reasonable," said Laura, looking disconsolately into the fire. "I never thought of it before. I don't think I should have wanted so to go to the new house if I had." She went away after dinner, and did not come down again, saying she was packing books; but when Mr. Pringleston passed her door, she came out to bid him good night, and then he saw that she had been crying.

In that last fortnight of Laura's remaining at the old house, Mr. Pringleston's walks got sadly neglected. The hour and a half before dinner was too enticing, and it was "only for a fortnight," as he said to himself. Towards the end of the time he began to forget that he was forty-two.

The last day came.

"You will come and see us directly?" said Laura.

"Yes, I shall come soon, while I may," said he. "By-and-by you won't want me."

"What do you mean?"

"When you begin to get fashionable, you won't want an old rusty schoolmaster."

"Mamma, do you hear how craftily he is fishing for a compliment? I shall not make you one, sir. But *mind!* you are to come. I made you do what I pleased, in the train when I was a little girl, and I shall make you do what I please still."

He went to see them very soon.

Their house was pretty and fresh, and he was shown up into a tasteful drawing-room where Laura and her mother were sitting at a kettledrum with a number of strange people. Mr. Pringleston was very shy, so he sat down and

mechanically consumed tea and bread-and-butter until people began to go, when he rose too.

"Wait five minutes," said Laura, in a low tone. He sat down very obediently till the house was cleared. Then Laura shut the door in triumph.

"Now, we will be cozy," said she. "Come out of that uncomfortable chair, you dear old Bluebeard, and come close to the fire." Oh, mamma dear! Isn't it nice to see a friend's face again? We are so tired of making new acquaintances," she added, looking to Edward for sympathy.

"My dear child," interposed Mrs. Stalman, "what an ungrateful speech. And after people have been so kind, and given you so many invitations!"

"Yes, I know, mamma dear; but it seems odd for people to come and see us because we have become rich. They didn't care for us when we were not rich."

"They didn't know us then, my dear; and now Mrs. Leith has introduced them to us, and it is quite a chance, even, that we know her. A most curious thing," she explained to Mr. Pringleston. "An intimate friend of poor John Tustin's in India, who saw him a fortnight before his death. She happens to be a client of the same solicitor who is acting for us, and so introduced herself."

"Very curious," said Mr. Pringleston, who had got into a dark corner, and was reflecting that Laura looked rather tired.

"If you had come in a little sooner," pursued Mrs. Stalman, "you would have met a friend: Mrs. Goldridge."

"Yes," interposed Laura, "and we are very angry that you never told us more about her. She says you are a most particular friend of hers."

Mr. Pringleston presently made another effort to leave, but was persuaded to remain and dine, as they had no engagement for that evening. His inward gratification at this arrangement was somewhat damped by the announcement: "Mr. Shepherd."

"Really it is too bad of me," that gentleman remarked, as he came in; "you ought to turn me out, after my coming yesterday; but I really couldn't help coming up, as the servant said you were in. I intended only to come to the door to ask if I had left an umbrella here, but your windows looked highly inviting, and it is just beginning to rain. Why, Pringleston! How do you do? The idea of your knowing Pringleston!"

"The idea of *your* knowing him I think more remarkable," said Laura, with a look into the dark corner where he sat.

"I was at school under him," cried Mr. Shepherd. "I used to look up to him awfully in those days, I assure you."

The rain now beginning to announce itself against the window-panes very noisily, Mrs. Stalman, under the influence of an impulse, framed and uttered a proposal which she would ordinarily have taken a week to decide upon.

"It is terribly wet, Mr. Shepherd. Mr.

Pringleston is going to stay and dine with us, en famille. If you are disengaged, I hope you will stay too."

Mr. Shepherd was delighted, and led Miss Stalman down in high spirits.

After dinner neither gentleman appeared conversationally inclined, and both repaired to the drawing-room so soon that they found Mrs. Stalman examining her accounts. An excellent knowledge of arithmetic had frequently enabled Mr. Pringleston to be of great service to Mrs. Stalman, who was not strong on that head, and hitherto he had always been happy to assist her. To-night, however, when his aid was once more called in, the thought struck him that the knowledge of arithmetic was an inconvenient knowledge. It might have been better to have had some knowledge of music; in that case he could have sat by Laura in the back drawing-room, could have played her accompaniments, and turned her leaves. Surely he might have made a better thing of it than Mr. Shepherd was making of his songs! Besides; Mr. Pringleston had not come there to do compound addition and listen to feeble tenor melody.

CHAPTER V.

MRS. STALMAN'S reverential opinion of Mr. Pringleston remained unimpaired, and she continued to refer all her difficulties to him as regularly as ever. But what was more important still, Laura seemed to welcome him now-a-days with almost greater cordiality than before. All their old jokes and confidences were religiously preserved. However unexpectedly he might appear, whatever she was doing, she always found him out in a second. Even when occupied in waltzing with Mr. Shepherd (a more frequent occurrence than her older friend liked), she always smiled at him over her partner's shoulder, in a way that all but compensated him for the vexation of seeing her so occupied.

Mr. Pringleston's familiar intercourse with the Stalmans soon gave rise to a report which annoyed him unaccountably. He had always considered Mr. Stevens, the solicitor, rather an underbred person; but there was not the slightest doubt of it when that person called him "a sly fellow who knew on which side his bread was buttered, and who was evidently going in for *the rich widow*!" This vulgarity was quite unpardonable. Mrs. Stalman was a good five years older than he was, and every one knows that, given a man and woman of forty, the woman is decidedly elderly while the man is in the prime of life. After all, a great many men *did* marry wives who were much younger than themselves. There were people of authority, too, who stoutly affirmed that unless there were at least fifteen years of seniority on the husband's side the matrimonial ship would probably be wrecked. Mr. Pringleston thought of these things continually. Mrs. Stalman would often interrupt his meditations by endeavouring to get up a conversation with him about her daughter's marrying;

but she found it extremely difficult to interest him in the subject. "I suppose men don't care about such things after a certain age," was her wise solution of the difficulty.

So no conversation had been held upon the subject, when one day Mr. Pringleston called as usual. Only Mrs. Stalman was visible.

"Not at home to any one else," said she to the servant. Her triumphant tone made Mr. Pringleston look up uneasily. "My dear friend," said she, with a radiant smile, "I am so glad you are come! I have expected you every day for this week past. I thought of writing, but I didn't know what to do, quite."

"Well?"

"Well! My dear girl, Laura, is engaged to be married. There! Now I have told you, I feel so relieved. For though it is very delightful to see them so happy, still I have never been quite easy. But now I know you approve, I shall be as happy as they are."

Mr. Pringleston had been balancing his hat between his knees. It fell off his knees and he stooped to pick it up, and then carried it to a distant table before answering. He looked very serious as he returned to his seat.

"You have not told me who he is, Mrs. Stalman."

"Haven't I? Really? But I am so excited and agitated that I am always making mistakes. Mr. Payne Shepherd. As I dare say you will have guessed."

"Yes," said he, getting up and strolling to the ferns in the back room. Mrs. Stalman was called away, and in her absence Laura entered. Mr. Pringleston started at the sound of her voice, and coming hastily forward took both her hands. "Your mother has told me," was all he could say.

"Has she?" cried Laura, the colour coming into her cheeks. "And I so wanted to tell you myself! I could not bear the idea of your hearing it from any one but me, so I would not let mamma write. Are you glad, Bluebeard?"

"No, dear," said he, "I am not glad to think of losing you."

"As if you *could* lose me! I will not submit to be lost! And besides, you *must* be glad because I am so happy. And you will like him very much, I am sure, won't you?"

"He wrote very bad exercises, Laura; I don't know how I shall be able to manage it," said he, trying very hard to smile.

Ah! It was hard work. Laura made no secret of her love, and gloried in showing it. As for Mr. Shepherd, Mr. Pringleston could not look at him for a sufficiently long time together to see how much or how little *he* might be in love. Yes. It was hard work to appear pleased and interested, and to seem to devote long hours of attention to Mrs. Stalman's discourses!

By-and-by preparations for the marriage began to be talked about. "Mr. Stevens has been speaking to me about the settlements," said Mrs. Stalman. "It seems there will have to be trustees. You will be one, of course?" But here Mr. Pringleston was very resolute. "I would far rather not have the responsibility.

A pressing occasion has arisen, too, for my going abroad. I *must* go, come what will."

The wedding was to take place in August, and he went abroad in July. He had not been in Paris since that early visit, on his return from which he had first met Laura. He went on through Germany, perpetually changing the scene of his distress, and trying to persuade himself that he had done right in leaving no address behind him in England, so that news from home might not disturb his search after tranquillity. Yet after all, somehow he found himself speaking to Mrs. Goldridge, who turned up one day at Homburg, and inquiring after common friends with great eagerness.

"Well," said she, after some talk: "I have been waiting very patiently for you to tell me all about the Stalmans; but it seems to me you are going to be as close as ever."

"I have been away longer than you have, and have had no letters. The—the—Marriage took place in August, I believe? The day was not fixed when I left, but the month was."

Mrs. Goldridge opened her eyes very wide:

"Good gracious! Haven't you seen Monday's Times?"

"No."

"Come home with me, and let me show it to you."

She would not tell him a word more, but conveyed him to her lodgings, produced the paper, and pointed out an announcement under the head of Marriages, in which the bride and bridegroom's names were respectively: Geraldine Royle and W. Payne Shepherd.

"You are ill, Mr. Pringleston!"

"No, no. I feel the heat a little. Nothing, nothing. How long have you known of this?"

"I knew nothing of it before I saw it in the paper. Only, I heard before I left home that the Royles were all right again. It appears the failure of their bank was a false report: was, after all, confined to some comparatively unimportant losses. They never actually stopped."

Within four days, Mr. Pringleston arrived at Mrs. Stalman's house. It was night.

"Miss Stalman is very ill a-bed, sir," said the servant, "and missis is with her."

"Merely say I am here, and beg Mrs. Stalman not to come down on any account, unless it is quite convenient."

He was shown into the drawing-room, and the servant lighted one jet of gas in each of the chandeliers in the two rooms. They looked very dismal under this aspect, and his heart ached at sight of a pile of Laura's songs, which had been carelessly heaped together by a servant. The top one bore her name, written by Shepherd, and from a little work-basket on the table a piece of work peeped out which she had been doing for him, and over which Edward had often seen her smile.

The door opened noiselessly, and the poor

mother came in. They greeted one another in silence, and she sat down and sobbed.

Mr. Pringleston rose and paced the room for a while.

"I know nothing about it," he said at last, "beyond the fact of the marriage."

"Oh, it has been such a sad business! Such a sad business! I thought at first it would have come right if only you had been here; but now I see it was for the best. I am glad it is all over"—she spoke angrily—"for he is a false and mercenary villain."

Mr. Pringleston did not by any means contradict her.

"He appeared in his real character when they began to talk about the settlements. He wanted more money than the trustees would allow, and Mr. Stevens was very angry about it. At least, I think that was it. At any rate, he told, first Mr. Stevens, and then me, that he could not carry out the marriage on such terms. He went away, leaving me to break it to her. Ah, my friend, my friend! I wanted you sadly then."

"How is she now?"

"Very ill; but, thank God! out of danger."

"Does she speak of it much?"

"Never. She never mentions his name."

Many would have seen her if they might, some from curiosity, some from kindness; but only one person was admitted to see her. Day after day, Mr. Pringleston sat long hours with her. They never spoke of the trouble, and often sat silent; but those hours were the most precious hours in Laura's life. "Oh! It is a wonderful thing to have a friend!" she said one day at dusk, as he sat by her couch. She added, as she kissed his hand: "I feel so comforted when you are here; you seem to *understand* so. Sometimes I think you must have known some trouble like mine."

"Yes, dear Laura," he answered, in a very low voice. "Neither you nor I can love twice!"

But the questions that remain to be pronounced are, whether she really loved but once, and if once, whom? And if she had deceived herself in supposing that she loved that shallow scoundrel, whom did she love when she undeceived herself? Guess!

As for Mr. Pringleston;—that he did not love twice, and that he never tried to do it, can be stated on oath. And yet he got married, mistrustful of himself in that wise, as he had been. If he had been less mistrustful of himself, whom might he have married, even before he saw himself in the glass and found he was forty-two? Guess! And whom did he most happily marry after all? Guess! It was not Mrs. Stalman. Guess again!

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BOOK V.

CHAPTER I. BROTHER AND SISTER.

It is in the early part of the London season, and the weather is bright and warm. Cautious people, who habitually distrust our perfidious climate, have ventured to assume light clothing, adapted for summer wear. The watering-carts leave tracks of black mud down the middle of west-end thoroughfares, and splash the margin of the hot pavements with showers that raise an odour as of tons of damp slate-pencil. The draggled fringe of suburb that hangs upon the trailing skirt of the great city, bursts into patches of dust-laden green, behind the monotonously ugly iron railings, or the blackened brick walls, that shelter "villa residences" from the profane vulgar. The profane vulgar, however, is very hard to shut out effectually. Even in the genteel parts of the suburbs, little grimy hands are thrust between iron rails to seize rich sprays of lilac or the gold laburnum blossom, and little grimy faces, pinched, pallid, and vicious, light and flush into something like childhood, as they bury themselves in the fragrant ill-gotten posies.

On miles and miles of wooden hoarding glare great bills, bearing, in gigantic characters, the most heterogeneous announcements addressed to all classes of the public. Blue letters on a white ground, red letters on a yellow ground, black letters on every imaginable coloured ground, setting forth such varied luxuries and attractions for body and mind, and such infallible panaceas for "all the ills that flesh is heir to," as might, one would think, suffice to make a terrestrial Paradise of the great Babylon. The new book, the new medicine, the new bonnet, the latest scientific improvement in crinolines, and the most approved food for cattle, combining a minimum of price with a maximum of nourishment, appeal to the passer-by, side by side, in curious juxtaposition. Nor are there wanting appeals of a higher character. There is a monster meting at Exeter Hall for the conversion and enlightenment of—everybody who happens differ to on certain topics from the

amiably intentioned chairman and committee of that particular society. There is high mass, with a sermon in Italian by a cardinal, and a full band and staff of "eminent vocalists" from the two great Opera Houses. One especially conspicuous announcement flares in rainbow hues from wall and hoarding. It is the poster of the Royal Thespian Theatre. "Romeo and Juliet! Romeo and Juliet! Romeo and Juliet!" repeated over and over again in every imaginable type and colour. "The new actress! Great and legitimate success! Crowded houses! Free list entirely suspended! Miss M. A. Bell will repeat the character of Juliet every evening until further notice; supported by Mr. Alaric Allen as Mercutio, and the company of the Royal Thespian Theatre!"

Hundreds, thousands, of busy men and women passed the gaudy announcement every day. It was difficult to avoid seeing it; so it is to be supposed that the passers-by saw it. But its purport probably did not penetrate to the "mind's eye" of ten per cent out of those whose outward sense perceived it. But of all the crowds of human beings who hurried or sauntered past the Thespian poster that brightened the neighbourhood of the Great Northern Railway station, on one sunny afternoon at the beginning of June, 18—, one individual at least did stop before it, stood gazing at it a sufficient time to have not only read, but spelt, every word it contained, and, having once moved to go, turned, and stood, and gazed again, and finally moved away dreamily up the resounding slope of Pentonville, that vibrates to the rattle of wheels all through the weary day. Up the slope of Pentonville went this individual; a young man with a grave, sad face, and dressed in sober mourning garments. When he reached the top of the hill that overlooks a dusky realm of house-tops looming through the smoke and mist, he turned to the left, past the White Conduit House towards Barnsbury. He then walked more briskly for some distance, until he came to a small newly built house, covered with buff stucco, that made it look as though it were made of pie-crust. The adjoining house on either side of it was unfinished. The houses over the way were unfinished. Behind it stretched a barren waste partially overgrown with rank grass, and plentifully bestrewn with fragments of broken pottery. It gave one

the idea that the heavens must surely rain broken pottery in the neighbourhood of De Montfort Villas. A oestermonger's donkey was cautiously picking his way amongst the pots-herds, and browsing on the soot-encrusted herbage. Two ragged men lay basking in the sunshine, at the extremity of the waste ground, hard by a tall post which bore the announcement that "This eligible piece of land was to be let for building purposes." All these details were visible from the back windows of No. 9, De Montfort Villas. It was the only completed house of the row, and looked as though it had been just baked and turned out, slightly underdone, from some colossal oven. It is hard to say why number nine should have been completed before number one; or, indeed, why this especial house should have been number nine at all, seeing that there were to be but six houses in the row. But so it was. And at the door of the house distinguished for some inscrutable reason as number nine, the young man whom we saw contemplating the rainbow-hued poster, stopped. He opened it with a latch-key and went in. The inside of the little house was clean and fresh, but wore the same aspect of underdone newness as the outside. The young man hung his hat upon a hook in the passage, and entered a little back parlour. The room is tenanted by two ladies. Both look up as he enters. Surely we know those faces, spite of the change that the last few months have made in each. That of the elder lady is still round and plump, but it bears traces of trouble on its formerly placid surface. The mouth is drawn, and quivers nervously in any surprise or emotion; and the eyes are sunken, and their orbits swollen with much crying. The younger woman is thin, and very pale, but as she raises her head from her work, there is no mistaking that resolute projecting chin, those steel-bright glittering eyes.

"You're home early, Clem," says Penelope Charlewood, for she it is. The rich, trailing, silken robes, and massive, costly ornaments that distinguished her attire in the old prosperous days, have been exchanged for a plain, almost coarse, black gown, neat and whole, but ill-fitting, and evidently home-made. The delicate white collar and cuffs at her throat and wrists are the only remnants of luxury in her attire; and her hands, busy with some needlework of the most uncompromisingly ugly and useful kind, show traces of hard labour. Penelope had had handsome, fair hands, almost her only beauty. From the very beginning of their poverty, she had exposed them unflinchingly to the roughest business she could find for them to do. Her mother had once or twice remonstrated with her, and urged the needlessness of such disfigurement. But Penelope had answered stoutly, "Never mind, mamma! If my hands are as white as Clem's, I shall be quite satisfied. To tell truth, I did think a good deal of those paws of mine. They were pretty, you know. I might have caught myself shrinking from doing something or other to help Clem some

fine morning, if I had allowed myself to care about the colour of my hands. Think of that! So I just resolved to spoil their beauty at once, and have done with it."

"You're home early, Clem," said she once more, as her brother threw himself wearily into a chair, commanding a full view of the building-ground and the donkey.

"Yes, dear; but I intend to go back again to the office for an hour or two to-night. There will be some foreign letters to answer by this mail."

"Ow tired you look, Clement," said Mrs. Charlewood, anxiously. "It's 'ot, ain't it?"

"No, mother—yes, I mean it is, rather."

Penelope rose quietly, and went into the little kitchen to prepare tea. They had a servant, but her abilities did not extend to the adequate preparation of the simplest meal. Indeed, I doubt whether Penelope, in her jealous devotion to her brother, would have consented to resign that office to the most accomplished cordon bleu.

As soon as her daughter had left the room, Mrs. Charlewood drew near to Clement, and asked in a suppressed voice, "'Ave you seen Watty to-day, love?"

"Not to-day, mother; but I will try to find him as I go back to the office. Don't fret, dear mother, don't fret." The tears were in Mrs. Charlewood's eyes.

"No, Clem, no, I won't. God knows I'm thankful to him every day and every hour, for 'aving you and Penny; but you know Watty's my child too, and I feel it 'ard sometimes to see him so seldom. Don't be angry with me, my boy; I can't help it."

"Angry, dear mother?"

"No, love, no. There! I knew you wouldn't be angry; but Penny is, sometimes."

"Penny has trials too, mother, and bears them bravely."

"Yes, to be sure, Clem, I know she does; and as to a good daughter—Well, there, I'm sure I never thought it was in Penny to be so kind and considerate as she is to me. And she's never sharp with me now—almost never; only she—she's 'ard sometimes on Watty. If he *did* get tired of living 'ere with us, and found it dull, and went into lodgings of his own in a livelier situation, why, law! I'm sure it was very natural."

There was a short pause.

"At all events, mother," said Clement, kissing her, "it is done, and we can't alter it. We must make the best and not the worst of poor Walter's doings."

Presently, Penelope came back with the teapot in her hand, and the servant followed bearing a tray laden with cups and saucers. The mother, her son, and daughter took their meal together quietly, but without gloom; only Clement's unusual silence and absence of mind did not escape his sister's quick eye. No shade of manner in those she loved easily escaped her keen observation. The sun sank lower; the ragged men had arisen and were gone; the

donkey still perseveringly mowed down the rank grass with his strong crunching teeth; a caravan of children was stumbling homeward over the desert waste, the leaders in front carrying babies, and the smallest bringing up the rear with tottering footsteps, much impeded by the fragments of broken crockery, and imperiously shouted to by a shrewish, hungry, little girl in the van to "come a—a—an!" To these cries the little ones responded by piteous, long-drawn wails and boo-hoos that gradually died away in the distance. It was not a cheerful scene, and its sights and sounds seemed to be reflected in Clement's face.

And it is possible that he may have got some unconscious impression of its dreariness, although, in fact, his thoughts were busy with far other things.

"Will you come out into the wilderness and have a cigar, Clem?" said Penelope, when tea was over.

"I've smoked my allowance for to-day, Penny. Don't assail my virtuous resolutions."

"No, I won't," said Penny, decisively. "If a man makes a promise to himself he ought to stick to it; but you may come into the wilderness for a quarter of an hour. We shall be within sight of the parlour window, if mamma should want us. Are you tired, though?"

"Not I, dear; and *you* look as if a breath of air would do you good. Get your hat on, Penny."

The brother and sister walked out together and passed through the small back yard into the waste ground which Penelope styled the wilderness. For a few minutes they walked on in silence, arm in arm. At length Penelope spoke:—"You know our compact, Clem. I can't do anything for you, nor *be* much, but I claim my share of the suffering. You are dejected and out of sorts. What is the matter?"

"Penny, when you claim your share, as you call it, of the suffering, there might something be said of your being and doing too; but perhaps there need no words about all that between you and me. I am ready to tell you, but I don't feel quite sure that I ought to add to your burthens by teasing you about—"

"There, stop! That's so like a man. They think they can do everything themselves, fight and battle, and then brush off the dust handsomely, and come home smug and smiling to the women-folks, saying, "There, don't distress yourself, my love; I've chopped off arms and legs in every direction, and borne the heat and burthen of the day, but here is a diamond necklace, or a new bright saucupan, or something adapted to *your* capacity."

Clement smiled sadly.

"I'm afraid you don't get even the bright saucupan, Penny," said he. His sister pressed his arm with the hand that rested on it.

"Don't mind me, Clem, I must say my say; but it does seem to me that women are so often expected to be like the image of the Madonna that Browning wrote of:

Our lady borne smiling and smart,
With a pink gauze gown, all spangles,
And seven swords stuck in her heart.

Now I can bear the swords, if I may but abjure the smiles and the spangles. What is the matter?"

"I have seen," he replied, very slowly, "another—"

"Not another of those letters, Clem?"

"Yes, dear; another of those letters."

"My God!"

"Mr. M'Culloch called me into his private office when I went there this morning, and put it into my hands."

"Oh, Clement! Oh, my dear brother!"

"M'Culloch has shown me every one of these infamous letters from the first. He says it is out of the question that they should make the smallest impression on him, that he treats all anonymous communications with contempt, and that his confidence in me is unshaken. Nothing could be better than the way M'Culloch has behaved. All his desire is, he says, that the miscreant who is endeavouring to stab me in the dark should be discovered and punished. He begged me again to-day to search my memory well, to try and find some clue to this mystery. But it is in vain. I have thought and thought; but who is there in all the world who can hate me so bitterly as to do me this iniquitous wrong?"

"Of course M'Culloch cannot believe these lies. Who could believe them that knows you? After all, why should you grieve, Clem? The villain's aim is foiled. He cannot hurt you."

"No, thank God, I hope he cannot. I believe he cannot. But yet, if you knew the anguish of mind I endure sometimes! There is a subtle, devilish ingenuity in these letters that fills me with amazement."

A brooding, anxious frown settled on Penelope's pale face.

"What was in this last letter, Clement?" she asked, in a low voice.

"Oh, the same old strings harped upon. My extravagance, my untrustworthiness, my want of honour, my passion for gambling in all its forms. The same aspersions cast on the memory of him who is gone from us. All our great speculations were but the reckless ventures of unprincipled gamblers. And—and—the great calamity of our lives is described as the voluntary escape of a cowardly criminal who finds detection imminent."

Penelope's face was already pale, but it grew death-like as she listened, and a faint, sick feeling caused her to lean heavily for a moment on her brother's arm.

"And then the wicked craft of attributing to *me* all poor Walter's follies and faults blackened into crimes. The writer evidently

knows that my brother has been placed in his present position at the bank on M'Culloch's recommendation and guarantee, and reckons on my desire to screen Walter to seal my mouth."

"It is monstrous!" burst forth Penelope, with flashing eyes. "Monstrous and cruel, and wicked—yes, wicked—that you should bear this! Tell Mr. M'Culloch the truth, Clement; tell him that the transactions mentioned in these vile letters are your brother's, and that you have never in your life——"

"Hush, Penny; hush, my dear. Think of what my saying so would involve."

"It would involve justice being done to you, and that would be a righteous thing."

"Justice to me? Ah, Penny, it is my turn now to preach faith and patience. It is enough that M'Culloch, being an honest, upright man, despises these calumnies. But for Watty—poor, weak, misguided boy—I must keep him safe and clear if possible. Only a fortnight ago when I remonstrated with him about something I had heard, and spoke vaguely of the risk he ran of offending his employers if his conduct were known, he interrupted me with one of his wild fits of childish temper. 'If any blame is thrown on me by *them*,' he said, 'if I am lectured, or held up as an example, or taken to task like a servant, by Heaven! I'll leave the place that moment, and never set foot within the bank doors again.' Then he raved on about his being a gentleman, and how hard his fate was in being brought down so low, and finally he began to cry—began to cry and whimper, Penny, like a girl, until, I swear to you, the pain and shame of seeing him were almost more than I could bear."

Penelope set her lips together grimly.

"I think," said she, "I could have borne that, better than I can bear some other things. Let him leave the bank, as he has left two situations already. We have done all we can. He is a mass of selfishness. He has cut himself adrift from our home, although he well knows that poor mamma——"

The mention of her mother seemed to check her, and she stopped short.

Clement took his sister's arm which she had withdrawn from his, and pressed it gently to his side. "Penny," said he, "do you know, dear, I am going to confide to you what I have never yet told to any human being."

Her face flushed, and she looked at him quickly, but in silence.

"I hope," proceeded Clement, "that I should have tried to do my duty by poor Watty in any case; but—on the day that—that *he* died, he said to me, as though there were a knowledge of what was to come upon his mind, 'Clem, you'll stand by Watty? Poor Watty; you will stand by him? Don't forsake him, my boy.' I gave my father my word, and so help me God, I will keep it."

The brother and sister walked side by side towards their home, where, through the gath-

ing dusk, Mrs. Charlewood's face in its doleful frame of widow's weeds was peering from the window. The tears streamed down Penelope's wan cheeks, as she raised herself to kiss her brother.

"God bless you, Clem," she whispered. "I *have* faith, and I'll never despond nor despair about you. The devil's a mighty clever fellow, but, thank God, he's not quite clever enough, my dear."

CHAPTER II. CLEMENT CUTS AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

CLEMENT CHARLEWOOD walking back to his office in the summer twilight, and following a route that would take him past his brother's lodging, revolved many painful thoughts in his mind. And, strange to say, these painful thoughts were in no way connected with the subject of his recent conversation with his sister.

What impenetrable mysteries, and store-houses of strange secrets, are we human creatures to one another! The tongue and the eye at best translate our thought but imperfectly; but when these are silent—when the spirit is busy within the still locked chambers of the brain—what cunning sorcery shall draw forth its secret? What human soul—nearest and dearest though it be—shall fathom those dark recesses, and see and know us as we are?

If Penelope Charlewood had been asked to guess the subject of her brother's meditations during his walk to the City, she would undoubtedly have said, "He is thinking of Walter, and of those wicked letters." Very certainly she would have had no suspicion that Clement's brain was haunted by the vision of a huge red and yellow poster, whereon gigantic letters flamed in gaudy colours. And yet it was of this poster, and of the performance at the Royal Thespian Theatre, that Clement was thinking as he walked along. It was now three weeks since he had seen Miss M. A. Bell announced to play Juliet. It was the only intimation he had had of Mabel's being in London. How, indeed, could he have had any news of her, save such news as he might share with all the world? He walked on, down Pentonville-hill, and past the hoardings where the many-coloured bills flaunted their tidings on the eye. "Romeo and Juliet! Romeo and Juliet! Romeo and Juliet!"

Clement had, perhaps, not been to a theatre half a dozen times in his life, but he had been a great reader and lover of Shakespeare, and a wondering speculation stole into his mind as to how Mabel, *his* Mabel—(but no! that was all over)—would interpret the character of the love-lorn Juliet. How she, so proud, so cold, and so unmoved in her maiden dignity, would utter the passionate vows, and caressing tender phrases, of the poet's creation;—that dazzling southern lily, with one bright bitter tear in its perfumed heart. For an instant the temptation crossed his mind to go and see her, himself un-

seen and unnoticed in the crowd. But he dismissed the notion. "I could not bear it," said he; "and it would do no good to me or to any one else if I could." Still, as he walked, Mabel's face—so long unseen by his bodily eyes—haunted his memory; and his fancy was tormented by a fruitless endeavour to picture that face with the strong glare of the stage-lights on its modest beauty. It would not do. It was like trying to find a steady outline amid the images reflected in rippling water. There was the form; but it moved and changed and melted, and could be fixed by no effort of his. So musing, he reached his brother's lodgings, whither he was bound in fulfilment of the promise given to his mother. Walter Charlewood occupied a room on the second floor of a very dirty, noisy lodging-house in a street near the Strand. A tall, sooty-visaged brick house, the unwashed blank ugliness of whose aspect seemed to communicate itself mysteriously to each one of the long line of maids-of-all-work who successively toiled up and down its rickety staircase. It was an evil-smelling, shabby, out-at-elbows house, with a queer nomade population of lodgers. Its atmosphere was dense and heavy even in the brightest weather; and to a fanciful mind it might have seemed that the roar of mingled sounds—impossible to analyse—that surged up around it from the great neighbouring thoroughfare, contributed as much as the smoke and fog to thicken and cloud the ambient air. Nevertheless, Walter had preferred its murky precincts to the clean little underdone stucco-house at Barnsbury. Uninviting as was his present abode, it did not offer the advantage even of economy. "I hate cheap and nasty things," said Penelope, "but Watty has ingeniously found something at once ineffably nasty and outrageously dear!"

However, the one compensation for all drawbacks in Walter's mind was, "the situation." "So central," said he; "one sees something of life. One is *get-at-able*. One can drop in at—at—different places, you know; and see a—a—different fellows, you know. And, by Jove, that lath and plaster shed at Barnsbury, overlooking a confounded dismal desert full of broken bottles, would have driven me melancholy mad in a fortnight."

Clement found the street door open, and the maid-of-all-work (the third who had held office during Walter's brief tenancy), engaged in a wrangle with the potboy, who held a spreading bouquet of dirty pewter pots in his hand, and clamorously persisted in demanding "them two other quarts as was sent to the back parlours last night."

"Is Mr. Charlewood in?" asked Clement, interrupting the dispute. The slatternly servant looked round with a saucy toss of her dust-coloured cap. "Dunno, sir, I'm sure. Mr. Charlewood? Two pair back. Fust door on the left 'and as you go up stairs."

The girl had not been long enough in the place to recognise Clement, or to know that he stood in no need of her direction. He mounted

the stairs to his brother's room. The door was closed, and he tapped on it with his fingers, but receiving no answer, went in. There was no one there, and the place looked littered and neglected. Clement looked about him for some means of writing a line to be left for his brother when he should return, but found no writing materials except a glass bottle thickly encrusted with dried ink, and containing at the bottom of it one drop of muddy black fluid. There was a wooden penholder, but no pen. Clement's face grew dark as he mentally compared this shabby frouzy room with the neatness, order, and bright cleanliness of the poor home over which his mother and sister presided. There were one or two personal luxuries in the chamber, contrasting oddly with the surrounding squalor. A massive leathern portmanteau stood in one corner; it was loosely strapped, but not locked, and the clothes within it were peeping forth in disorder. Two silver-mounted meerschauams were crossed over the mantelpiece, and an inlaid dressing-case of elaborate workmanship was open on the table, revealing one or two ugly gaps where gold and crystal had once glittered, and defiled with cigar-ashes sprinkled over its velvet lining. Clement tore a leaf from his pocket-book, and wrote on it in pencil:

"Dear Watty. Sorry to miss you. Do come to-morrow. I will call for you after banking hours as I come from the office, and we can walk to Barnsbury together. You *must* not fail, Wat. Mother is fretting at not seeing you so long.

"C. C."

This leaf he folded, and directed to his brother, and placed it beneath a box of fuses on the mantelpiece, thinking that in that neighbourhood it could not fail to be observed. Then he left the close room, and shut the door behind him. As he came out on to the landing he heard voices, and a woman descended from the third story, speaking a voluble farewell to some one out of sight. "Good-bye. You won't disapint me of my gown for Sunday! Don't you trouble to come down. I knows my way." She was a very untidy woman, with a faded smart bonnet, and rough light hair. She jostled against Clement as she came down the stairs with her eyes directed up towards the unseen person whom she was addressing. She had begun a sort of apology, when, looking at Clement, she stopped short, started, clapped her hands, and uttered a loud exclamation of astonishment. "Angels and ministers!" cried the untidy woman. "If it ain't Mr. Charlewood in proprius persony!"

Clement looked at her in surprise. "That is my name," said he. "Do you know me?"

"Well, I should rather think so, sir, an' ever likely to! Don't you remember me? Party of the name of Hutchins—New Bridge-street—little Corda! Ah, *there!* You recollect me *now*, don't you, sir?"

Clement did recollect her now. But as his recollection of Mrs. Hutchins was not an especially favourable one, and as any reminiscence of the time she alluded to was fraught with many bitter regrets in his mind, he merely gave her a brief though civil "good day," and ran quickly down the stairs.

The woman stood on the landing looking after him.

"Highly tighty!" she muttered. "Come-downs in the world don't seem to *meeken* some folks. A nasty stuck-up fellow, as was glad enough to come to my house once upon a time, too. An' p'raps he'd have been glad to be a bit civiller *now*, if he'd have knowed all."

Mrs. Hutchins screwed her mouth into a cunning smile, and nodded her head. The good lady's old thirst for information had not left her, it appeared; for on her way out of the house she encountered the slatternly servant, and, assuming an insinuating fascination of manner, proceeded to cross-question her keenly. The girl was disposed to be communicative enough on the subject of her own hardships and wrongs, but was able to say very little regarding Clement. This much, however, Mrs. Hutchins drew from her; that a young gentleman named Charlewood lodged in the house, that he kept late hours, gave little trouble, and was, in the maid-of-all-work's opinion, "a rig'lar wild 'un."

"Lord bless me!" said Mrs. Hutchins, raising her hands and eyes in astonishment. "Well, live and learn, to be sure; but who'd ever ha' thought as my—ahem!—my young friend 'ud 'av turned out like that. I knowed him intimate in 'appier times, my dear, when the bloom was on his early brow, but now Otheller's ockkyption's gone, and no mistake!"

"Lor!" said the slatternly servant.

"Yes," continued Mrs. Hutchins, warming into romance; "it's been a pretty considerable come-down for the lot of 'em. I was, I may say, 'and and glove with the famaly, and with the young lady as he kep' comp'ny with. But now things is changed. She wouldn't look at him now, Lord bless you, not she."

"More shame for her, if she was his sweetheart onct," said the dirty servant, with a spark of right womanly sympathy with misfortune, and respect for true love illumining her coarse face.

"Ah!" exclaimed Mrs. Hutchins, mysteriously, "you don't know all, my dear. There's famaly reasons as I *could* reveal, but my lips is sealed aromatically. So he lives here, quite by hisself, eh?"

"Mr. Charlewood do. Quite by hisself."

"I wonder what's got the others. Well, they was always a uppish lot. Sprung out of nothink, and returned back again to oblivium. Good morning, my dear."

Mrs. Hutchins betook herself along some streets at the back of Drury-lane, marvelling

much at her recent encounter with young Charlewood, and still more at the account given of him by the lodging-house servant.

AN IRISH RUN.

EVERY year I make a point of running over to some part or other of "the old country." I do so from conscientious motives, thinking it right to spend the very little I can put aside for "touring" in the poorest and least-visited portion of these islands. For the same reason, and also because it is good, strong, and serviceable, as well as cheap, I wear Irish frieze, and clothe my boys in it. I am Irish by blood; though I do not think this fact influences my practice, for I regret to say that I can scarcely ever persuade any born Irishman to do as I do. "What's the use," says he whom I try to tempt with samples of tweeds and double-milled beavers—"what's the use, till the land laws are set right?" or "till that monstrous abuse, the Established Church, is pulled down?" or, if he is of the other way of thinking, "so long as these rascally agitating priests have it all their own way, and are petted by successive governments, while honest men are left in the lurch?" However, as it seems to me that I, and my sons too, will very probably have gone beyond the need of coats and summer trips before those questions are settled, I go on as I began, reminding my friends and countrymen that the Flemings did not sit down and cease manufacturing because a good many important matters, such as feudalism municipal rights and, afterwards, religion, were being fiercely battled for among them.

This is an exceptional year. Everybody is at Paris; but still I could not help wondering that at place after place along the west coast nobody seemed on the move but priests, except, indeed, four "distinguished foreigners," Frenchmen, who had preceded me by some days, and of whose names the different hotel-keepers seemed immensely proud. This dearth of visitors more than accounts for some short-comings which are justly (among the many which are unjustly) laid to the charge of Irish inns. A fine hotel is built; everything is prepared in the best style for the guests, who do not come in remunerative numbers. The innkeeper falls back on farming; and when his window-lines break, he supplies their place by propping up the window with a bit of stick; when his plated forks wear out, he replaces them with iron; when his salt-spoons are lost, he does not replace them at all. This, of course, is not true of Killarny and a few other favoured spots, though even there the rush of tourists is never great enough to make the hotel proprietors feel quite comfortable. In such quarters there are (as there are in all the large Irish towns) hotels second to none in Europe. It is in places somewhat off the very few popular routes that the contrast with England is unfavourably seen. Inns have declined

in most of the country towns, for instance. Who is to support them? Absenteeism grows worse and worse, and railways enable the agent or other traveller to "move on" without indenting on the resources of the local capital for more than a mutton-chop. In one little (once fashionable) watering-place on the coast of Clare, Lahinch, where there is a really capital hotel, I wonder how its owner can have the heart to keep up anything, so utterly is the place deserted, except by "the peasantry," who have an immense love of sea-bathing, but who do not put up at the Victoria during their visit.

Lahinch, by the way, is just the place where a man who wants to economise should take his family for a month or two. It is far more accessible than Brittany, that paradise of economists. You get to Limerick. I being a Wessex man, and rather a good sailor, went across from Bristol direct to Waterford; but you may, if you please, go from Milford—a much smoother passage (I am told) than that by Holyhead. I fancy the Great Western will give you return tickets to Limerick. Thence it is an hour and a half by rail to Ennis, the capital of Clare, with its huge jail full of memories of the Terry-Alt days, and its column surmounted by a statue of "the Liberator," whose election for Clare settled off-hand the question of Catholic emancipation. At Ennis, a "two-horse car" meets the train, perhaps the pleasantest kind of vehicle ever invented for dry weather; and, as to weather, either I have been singularly lucky during a long series of years, or the Irish climate is shamefully maligned. I believe the fact is, people don't go to Ireland at the right time.

The Irish seasons are a little later than ours; and so the wet which we get in July comes on there in our usually dry August. Anyhow, this year I hear a great deal about rain in all parts of England, while over here those interested in potatoes are crying out for a wet day to swell the roots. Well. Your two-horse car drives you through a pretty country, past Ennistymon, an old seat of the O'Briens, where there are portraits of Sarsfield, the defender of Limerick, and lots more worthies of that and earlier dates, and where there is a river on whose stone flags you may see groups of girls who have had a dip in the sea, taking a fresh-water bath "to keep their skins in good order." At last you get to Lahinch, at the head of a fine bay with a castle on either point, and a lively little fishing village, Lisconnor, on one side, and such a rush of water in from the Atlantic, that although the sea has a double rampart of very big shingle to break against it is constantly knocking down the parapet which bounds the esplanade. Who builds it up again I cannot understand; Irishmen are not given to do such things for themselves; most likely it is the government. Possibly some one has the repairing of it for a permanent job, just as they told me a contractor gets fifteen pounds a year for keeping the sand from getting over the road

just outside the place. For below the shingle there is plenty of sand at Lahinch. I'm not turfy, but I should think the beach would do admirably for a race-course at low tide. I don't claim originality for this idea. The idle donkey-boys (fancy their being left idle, when they can be hired, donkeys and all, for twopence and threepence an hour!) were putting it into practice; and I was sorry there was not here such a cavalcade as one meets of an afternoon along the Brighton Steyne: I am sure the horses would have liked Lahinch sands much the better of the two.

But I talked of economising. What do you think of a place where meat is sixpence a pound, where for threepence you can get fish enough for four people's Friday dinner, where eggs are sevenpence a dozen, and other things in proportion? Room rent, too, is very moderate compared with Welsh or English prices. One Cornelius O'Brien, who owns two "lodges" facing the sea, asks seven pounds for his best month, and six pounds for June; or, if you don't want so much accommodation and cannot stay so long, he will give you three rooms for fifteen shillings a week. At that rate, if you have been used to Bangor or Weymouth, you will pretty soon save your travelling expenses by coming to Lahinch. To attract you yet more, I will say that the coast to the south is exceedingly fine—Mal Bay it was called by the unfortunate crews of the Armada, who found evil enough there, as Spanish Point, where several of their ships went ashore, can testify. North of Lahinch, too, are the cliffs of Moher, rising five hundred and eighty-seven feet above the sea level, and stretching along unbroken for several miles. Their peculiarity, which adds much to their grandeur, is that they are not masked by any débris at the base. Either the mica-slate wears away differently from most other rocks, or the swell of the Atlantic is powerful enough to carry to a distance the fragments which it washes off.

Yet I have not much hope of getting you to Lahinch. I do, however, expect to be able to persuade you to try at least a short run to Connemara. I have just been making a dash over the old ground again; and, by detailing my route, I shall show what may be done in a single day in the way of sight-seeing in West Galway. From Lahinch I went to Lisdoonvarna, a "spa" not mentioned in any map or guide-book that I can find, and yet, just now, the most popular place in Ireland among the Munster people. I heard of it all the way off at Clonmel, and was told that patients came there even from America, much to the advantage (said my informant) of "poor Ireland" (as he called her), for whose good he himself could not be persuaded to wear a home-made coat or to use good Dublin instead of third-rate Sheffield cutlery. I did not find any but natives there. I had to dine with a lot of these at Lisdoonvarna. Three priests gave me a share of their car. They preferred the cheaper of the two hotels, so I went with them. I am not ambitious of sitting down to

table with grandees, but I do not like to be in company with three frouzy dames who take nothing but mutton-broth and dry toast, and with a herd of men who eat on an average five helpings apiece, beginning with a thick slice of hot fat bacon. What astonished me most was that nothing but water was drunk, except by the three ladies and the priests. Nor was a word spoken, except by the same six. Everybody seemed solemnly impressed with the duty of eating out his half-crown's worth; and, verily, although meat is at sixpence a pound, and the only pudding was a morsel of corn-flour blanc-manger with wine-sauce, and though—more Hibernico—they gave no cheese, I am sure some of the diners left Miss Ryan a very small margin for profit.

There was no bar for post-prandial liquoring at Miss Ryan's; the habit seemed to be to have the "materials" taken up to the bedrooms. At least, my clerical friends were grouped round cozy glasses of punch when I went up to say good-bye to them. I could not stay in Lisdoonvarna. I dreaded what breakfast might be. So I just saw the "spas," which are curious enough—a magnesia water, a chalybeate, and a sulphur spring, all pretty near each other in the gorge of a wild stream which has hollowed out a way through the black shale that looks as if the coal which is always making itself expected in Irish strata had here at last actually cropped out. Alas! it is only the look! In another spot there are two springs, sulphur and iron, within a hand's breadth of each other. Lisdoonvarna ought to be the Harrogate of Ireland. I am sure its sulphur water is nasty enough, and smells strongly enough in a hot sun to warrant the adoption of the title; but then a sulphur spa above all others wants baths, and there is no corporation here, as in Bath or Buxton, to pet the "waters," and lose so many hundred a year on them for the good of the town. Lisdoonvarna is blessed with a landlord who won't grant a single lease, and who raises the rent the moment his tenants show any signs of improving their habitations. So the wonder is that the "lodges" are as good as they are, and everybody exclaims against the recklessness of the other hotel-keeper, who has been building, and has really made a grand coffee-room, on ground his lease of which, held from a former proprietor, has only a few years to run. I can't help thinking that the strange blindness which Irish landlords show to their own interests and to those of the country is the real secret of Ireland's backwardness. If they would do as English landlords do, either make the improvements themselves or make it worth their tenants' while to make them, instead of acting in a way which bars all improvement, things would go on as merrily as in the old ditty, where the fire begins to burn the stick, the stick to beat the dog, and so forth. Until this happens, I fear that, despite all the efforts of Dr. Apjohn of Dublin to make known the virtues of its waters, Lisdoonvarna must remain for most people, except the lower and

middle-class Irish of Munster, just what it is now—a patch of white houses (some, by the way, surprisingly good and well-furnished) in the midst of a dreary peat bog.

I became so extravagant in my anxiety to get out of the "spa," that I actually went the length of taking a car all to myself for Ballyvaughan, on the Clare side of Galway Bay, where I heard there would be a chance of getting across to Galway for a shilling. A drearier country than that between these two places it is hard to imagine. Every time I come to Ireland I wonder more and more at our strange popular errors about it.

But the greatest mistake is to talk of Ireland as immensely fertile, and only kept back by the laziness of its inhabitants. There are very rich tracts in Ireland, but there is also a very large amount of very poor land. Peat bog is not an encouraging soil, especially when the subsoil is hungry sand. But peat bog can, by the hard labour of squatters, enticed by a four years' immunity from rent, and then "strung up pretty high" when they have got their ground into order, be made to bear something. The rocks of Burren and a good deal more of the county of Clare cannot by any possibility produce aught but mutton—excellent indeed, but very small, and at the rate of so few sheep to the acre that the rent of a "bulk" of rock-land is a scarcely appreciable quantity. Imagine a bare flat surface of white limestone, and fancy a giant setting himself to plough this in single ridges. Suppose, moreover, that besides being a foolish giant for his pains, he has taken a glass too much, so that his plough works unevenly, swaying a little from side to side, while the furrows are sometimes too close, at other times so wide apart as to leave quite a strip of limestone between them. Then let grass, and wild thyme, and cistus, grow up in the furrows; and let the bare rock between be weather-worn and split and seamed, and carved with what some enthusiasts call "Druid basins," and sometimes so rubbed away along the edges of a whole ridge that, with its hollows and protuberances, it looks like the backbone of some great monster; and, when you have done all this, you will have some notion of the Clare sheep-walks. If, instead of a level, you have a hill, you find it terraced, each terrace with its own perpendicular wall, until you begin to think that this must be Edom, not Ireland, and that those rock-walls, with what might well stand for doorways marked upon them, belong to the necropolis of some Celtic Petra. That, alternating with and relieved by bog (for bog is to me infinitely less depressing than such a stony wilderness), is the sort of country through which I drove to Ballyvaughan, a little fishing-town which lies in an amphitheatre of terraced hills such as I have tried to describe, and down into which the descent is by a road appropriately named the corkscrew.

At Ballyvaughan (which consists at most of twenty-five houses, so that the idea of staying a night there was terrible) I dashed along to the

pier, paid off my car, and found that the "packet" did not sail till the morning, "perhaps not then," and that a gentleman had two hours before paid fifteen shillings to be taken across in a fishing-smack. Here was a turf-boat getting ready to start for Connemara with the turn of the tide. "With a wind like this, she'll do it in four hours or less, sir," said the coast-guard man, a jolly Cork "boy;" and of all Irish people that I know the Cork men are the jolliest, as the Cork women are the fairest. Had I been "without encumbrance," I should have got some provisions and ventured; but I was the slave of letters, nay, of telegrams; so I bargained with three men to take me across for six shillings in a corrach, the canoe commonly used on this coast—a light wooden framework, covered with tarred sail-cloth, keelless in order that it may be dragged over sloping rocks.

Off we set, and three sturdier rowers I never saw. It was very smooth; and, when once I got reconciled to the idea that at any moment a cut from my knife would let in the waves, which, as they dashed against the stern, made the canvas perceptibly give way, I enjoyed the swift easy rush of the light boat over the surface. The men, who could scarcely speak any English, said they often went to the Isles of Arran in winter. "On a smooth day?" I opined. "No, but on a rough," they replied. "The boat is like a duck; she do be jumping along over the top of the waves." I was glad she did not have to try that mode of proceeding during my transit, though I found that my boys, whom I left at Kilkeel, had been out in a pretty rough sea, and had admired with a little trembling the duck-like motions of their corrach. We were to make the distance in two hours and a half. Alas for human plans! The night grew very dark, and it soon became evident that my crew did not understand the Galway lights. We ran aground—we drawing, perhaps, four inches of water. Two of the men got out, and tried to find the channel.

They then said there was no channel, and they must lie by till the tide came in. Now, I knew Galway Bay was shallow. I knew it to my cost, for I had had something to do with Lever's ocean steamers; but I did not believe that even at the lowest tide it was as shallow all over as that. So at last I got them to drop down and ask the way of a trawler moored near the light-house. Then ensued a loud parley in Irish, the result of which was that we got our course, and reached the dock-steps about an hour and a half after our time. Very angry with things and people in general, I sped off to the mail-car office, where the exceeding courtesy of the lady-clerk soon put me in good humour. Far from being vexed at having to talk to a stranger tourist just about midnight, she counselled me as to my route, and even marked down for me the distances, and showed me how, by a little management, I might see all the best

of the country, and be back in Galway next night.

In high spirits I went off to Black's Hotel. Here there was such a crowd on the stairs and at the door that I thought a Fenian general had been just captured inside. However, as I was walking side by side with a waiter, and endeavouring to extract something practical out of his assurance that I might have "anything" for supper, I found myself nearly enveloped in a haze of tulle, the wearers of which were hastening up to the ball-room. It was the assize ball, so I thought my chop would be far too commonplace to be attended to, and turned into Webb's, next door, where (to the credit of Galway) I got the best chop, with three kidneys attached, that I had eaten for a long time. This despatched, I had an argument on mixed education with two fellows who were waiting my departure to enjoy their shake-downs in the coffee-room (they took the opposite view to mine, so I had a pleasure in keeping them out of bed), and, a little before two, I started from the post-office on the two-horse mail car. I hope Galway is not always so late in its habits. I fear it is, though; for if assize-balls only come now and then, the Dublin mail goes out every midnight, and this must be a dissipating thing for a city which depends so much on those who come and go by train.

My only fear on the mail car was that I might roll off: I have a habit of falling asleep outside stage-coaches. So I strapped myself on, and slept what I think is called a dog's sleep almost as far as Oughterard, waking every now and then to see more trees than I had seen all the time I had been in Clare, and to catch a side-long glimpse at Lough Corrib. At Oughterard it was broad daylight, so I could see the three churches, Roman, Anglican, Wesleyan, whose respective flocks used to have such unseemly squabbles, and the neat houses of the parsons, and the schools, and the orphanage; I had time, too, to wonder how the Oughterard folks live, what is the place's *raison d'être*, before the fresh horses were put to. Then we drove on through country growing lovelier every half mile. "The pathless wilds of Connemara?" said I. Why this is fertility itself compared with the Lisdoonvarna bogs and the rocks of Burren. The whole valley, from Oughterard to Ballynahinch, seemed warm and cheerful. It had had nearly three months' dry weather, as a despairing Englishman who had been trying to fish the lakes told me. But I don't think that, even in wet weather, this part of Connemara can be cheerless. The grand evil is the want of human habitations. Eviction has gone through the land like a pestilence. The people have disappeared before it. The few who remain work with heavy hearts at vastly increased rents. Some good to the country may come of this by-and-by, but at present the only good is to the few—very few—out of the thousands who are gone, who are "doing well" in the New World. It is not pleasant, where there is surely little tillage enough, to see the

trace of the old furrows all along the slopes of the hills.

"All the people worth anything are dead or gone," said the English fisherman: he has been there every year for the last thirteen years, and so he ought to know. "Those who are left are either too weak to do a good day's work, or too demoralised to care to try." But I don't want to be political, so let me call on you to admire this chain of lakes sparkling in the sun, some studded with islets, some with their banks richly wooded, for wood will grow (if people have patience) at any rate here and there in Connemara. Glan-da-loch, on Garrómin Lake, is a case in point. Here Dean Mahon added to the "natural wood," and (as the guide-books say) the place, now a hotel, "is the only cheering spot in the waste between Oughterard and Ballynahinch."

At Ballynahinch Dick Martin ruled. We all remember Martin, of Martin's Aot; and, locally, others of the name were equally famous. One had a great fancy for putting down "patterns," and got terribly beaten at a fair where he attempted in person to stop the head-breaking. They are gone. The ruined heiress of the last Martin was drowned miserably as she was going with her betrothed to America after the famine had done its worst. How many emigrant ships strangely came to grief in those sad times! The old O'Flaherty's castle on the island—which Colonel Martin used as his prison, and out of which outlaw Burke made him give up a famous Terry-Alt by bringing a wild troop of Mayo men round the colonel's house and threatening to burn him in it if the prisoner was not released—is no longer tenanted. All this time I have had on my left hand the flattened hills of "Joyce's country," old land of giants now unhappily almost extinct, and the "twelve Pins," the highest of which is two thousand four hundred feet high, but which look much higher because of their rugged forms, and because they rise so steeply out of the flat valley.

Before nine I get to Clifden, and breakfast at Mullarkey's hotel, with "appointments" quite luxurious after those to which I have been accustomed in Clare. The waiter, a Tipperary boy who boasts that he always speaks the thing that is, urges me to take the round planned out by the lady-clerk aforesaid. "There's nothing to see here," says he. "If you were going to bathe for some time it's a very nice place; or if you wanted to look over the schools, now, and see how the two religions get on together, I might recommend it. But your best plan is to do as she told you; and" (here came out the reason for his anxiety) "I've got two clergymen who'll be very glad to join you in a car." I am happy to state that my "clergymen" were Dublin priests; if that diocese numbers many like them, it is far happier in its priests than some of the dioceses further south seem to be. They were gentlemen in every sense of the word, and highly educated withal. And now began the loveliest drive I have ever had in my life, not

the most wonderful, of course, for there are no snow-mountains here; but the shapes of glen, and mountain, and lake, and sea-inlet, are so beautiful and so varying that I am sure there is nothing in the three kingdoms to match them. Ireland has often been called the ugly picture in the beautiful frame; and hence it may be that its beauty, where it is beautiful, is so continuous. Even in Snowdonia there are every now and then uninteresting patches. How large these are in Scotland every walking tourist knows to his sorrow. Here there is no break in the lovely wildness. The interest never flags the whole way, as you sweep round by Streamstown Bay and half a dozen other coves, and, passing Letterfrack and Kylemore, with its two lakes, get at last to that grand gulf, the Killeries. Every look forward or back gave us some new bit of beauty. It was almost fatiguing, from the constant demand on the attention, either to mark islands glinting far out on the sunny sea, or natural woods of birch and dwarf oaks, or long slopes of green down the whole stretch of a mountain-side, or patches of purple heather, or tufts by the roadside of that large-bellied Irish heath which is only found on the western coast. We had splendid weather, just cloud enough to give us shadows drifting over the mountains, along with a sun so hot and bright as to make everything rejoice except the car-horse as he was toiling up-hill. Of course we could have done better with more wood. The beauty of it where it has been planted only made us the more regret that old Irish landlords were not of the mind of that canny Scot whose advice to his son was, "Be aye dhillin' in a tree, Jock, while ye're haudin' clavers wi' ouy one. They'll grow, d'ye mind, while ye're sleeping."

Leenane, at the head of the Killeries bay, is a place I should like to stay a week at, if I had free fishing, and also a yacht to sail down the gulf whenever I felt so minded. Instead of that, I only stay there ten minutes, enough time to get another car, and to buy from some ingenious little girls Connemara stockings at one shilling a pair—wonderfully cheap, they tell me at home, and are vexed that I didn't buy up the whole stock—and a pennyworth of Irish diamonds from a dear little boy. He only asked a penny, and I didn't like to "spoil him" by giving more. More beauties, and ever fresh ones, bring us to Maam, where is the hotel of which Lord Leitrim, by way of illustrating Irish hospitality, secured all the rooms in order that his enemy, Lord Carlisle, might not be able to stay the night there. The innkeeper has lately died a sad death. He got drunk at a fair, and was taken home and put to bed; but, as he became very violent, they locked him into the room, leaving him a candle by the bedside at which to light his pipe. By-and-by they heard screams, but attributed them to his drunken efforts to get out. When they did go to look, they found him so fearfully burnt that he died in a day or two after. The Irish short pipe, by the way, seldom causes any accident, despite

the reckless way in which it is used; for it is now constantly protected by a metal cap, so that it may be thrust lighted into the pocket without burning a hole, as it used so often to do before.

Close to Maam, on an island on an arm of Lough Corrib, stands Caislen na Circe, the Hen's Castle, the legend about which I may perhaps tell you some other day. My clerical friends went on to Cong. I hope they will move their brethren of the neighbourhood to get the great burial-ground there better cared for. Heaps of skulls and thigh-bones, bits of coffins, old coffin-plates, and tombstones just resting on a few loose slates, are by no means pleasing mementos *mori*. It is hard to understand how a sensitive and imaginative people can allow such a state of things to go on. Anyhow, it is a matter in which the priests might enforce a change for the better, if they would but try. Their influence would of course be all-sufficient in an arrangement of that kind. I am Irish to the backbone—much more Irish than the Irish, I am constantly being told; but I cannot help getting in a rage whenever I see an Irish churchyard. Why should their grave-stones be laid in that way, more like those of some outlandish savages than of decent Christians? Why is the whole place too often a neglected wilderness of nettles and bits of broken stone? I will tell you the "why" which my father used to give for this savagery. In the bad old times (said he) the Orangemen, after their drinking-bouts, would sally forth, and, instead of "wrecking" a few cottiers' cabins, would sometimes, by way of a change, wreck an old abbey with its churchyard. The poor slaves, whom the penal laws had reduced below the level of manhood, still clung to the burial-places of their fathers; but they abstained on purpose from decorating or even cleansing them. Cui bono? The adornment would only have been a sort of challenge to the vindictive enemy. Hence the habit of neglect and the painful disregard for things rightly held in reverence. And, as the tyrant's oppression is always visited on himself, the Orangeman grew as careless about the decent ordering of churchyards as he had driven the Catholic to be. He was like the Englishmen of the Georgian age, whose habits in regard to churchyards Hogarth has so remorselessly stereotyped. And let us not be too hard on Ireland, remembering that when most of us were boys, chuck-farthing was played on many an English gravestone, as it is in the picture of the Idle Apprentice, and bone-heaps were almost as common over here as they are now over there. But it is high time for better things. Orangeism has had its fangs drawn this long while; and, if there were but such a thing in Ireland as proper public opinion, it would already have taught the natives the same "sweeter manners" which it has brought in vogue among ourselves. This is a digression. I had been dropped by my two priests just by the Hen's Castle. Thence, after a "lunch" at Maam Hotel, I marched off along the four-mile road to meet

the car at Shindilla cross-roads. The view back was for some time magnificent. A storm seemed rising among the Pins, and the scene reminded me of Llanberis Pass, softening down in front into the Breconshire Beacons. This was followed, as soon as I had crossed the water-shed, by a very good imitation of the vale of Ffestiniog. A very good imitation it was, with the "Pins" on the right in their evening grandeur, the *Iar Con-naught* range, dark purple, in front, the low hills nearer—golden green or glorified grey, as the sloping sun glints along them, and the crowd of little lakes (covered, some of them, with white water-lilies), some of which (I know) are the head-waters of Loch Corrib.

I was in good time for the car. I don't like having to meet such things; their time is very uncertain; so I acted on the principle impressed on me at the Clifden office: "It's better for you to be waiting for it than expecting it to be waiting for you." Almost as soon as we started, the sunset began. I really think the sun in Ireland very often goes to bed by Greenwich time. I have seen many good sunsets, but never one to beat this. The whole sky was on fire. The "Pins" were glorified; they did not seem the same as those up whose sides in the early morning I had watched the mists creep. When we lost them by a turn in the road, we were consoled by the mountain north-east of them, which literally glowed red. "It always looks well when there's a fine sunset; we call it *Shawn na Graíne*, the shining of the sun," remarked a fellow-traveller.

But the sky was as beautiful as the mountains. Above the fire which glowed over the mountain-tops were masses of purple light, edged with flame, and floating in an ocean of duller purple. The west, too, was red; and the lake between was literally flooded with colour. Ireland is the land of sunsets. I should suppose the dampness has something to do with it, only that Indian friends tell me I should never talk of sunsets again if I saw one over the Neilgherries. As it is, I have three sun-effects to choose from: my first love, the Killarney Reeks as I once saw them from the top of Mangerton when the sun was going down; this Connemara sunset; and one (it was a sunrise) behind the rock of Theben, in the Danube, off Pressburg. Soon it got twilight, and one of the party told anecdotes of the Martins, while the other detailed how, while wolves were still found in the district, an Irish Androcles had pulled a great thorn out of a wolf's foot, and tended the animal till it recovered. The grateful beast went off, but soon after reappeared in company with another wolf, the two between them leading a fine Kerry cow, which they placed unharmed beside the man's door. He had the cow proclaimed at the chapel, but could not hear of any owner. It is this which makes me suspect the story. The wolves may have done what is laid to their charge, but the Galway man would never have been so weak as to "advertise" his winnings.

At last, after a long delay at Oughterard, we got to the city of Galway "in time for dinner," before starting off by the midnight train. I have not told of half I saw in my run. I don't think any one can describe scenery; he can only indicate to others what he has found worth seeing; the best part always vanishes in description. I wish I could describe Hynes, the driver of the mail car, up beside whom I sat when I had unstrapped myself that sunny morning. Not a bit of show, yet as much quiet humour in him as in half a score of carmen. "Much game here, driver?" "Pretty well of that, sir, now; the hares like the Fenians,"—because, let me explain, of the Arms Act. How good he is, too, about "improvements" of the breed, ending sometimes like the attempts to better the old Irish hen, which gives more eggs and bigger than any of its rivals, Cochins or no Cochins, after all. Coming in with me were a lean Lancashire farmer and his wife. I think the man was intending to "prospect" a farm. Anyhow, he was full of that self-assurance which has so constantly led the English to success, but which is naturally offensive to those against whom it is asserted. Nothing was right in Connemara; he could, by doing so and so, make the wilderness to blossom as the rose. Hynes was too cynical to put him down, but he gave him two or three hints by which he might have felt, had he not been too obtuse to feel anything but a kick, that maxims which suit one country well are not necessarily of equal force in another. Hynes is a sharp man; there is near, "Recess," the pretty wood-surrounded inn at the first stage beyond Oughterard, a place where they have made a good many attempts at mining. "Ah," said he, "if all that has been sunk in trying to make Irish mines pay, had been laid out in draining bogs, we should not have had the famine so bad."

Have I made you feel anything of the exceeding beauty and the intense solitude of the country round Kylemore? There, where fuchsia hedges show that man is close by, though not seen, we pass a brood of wild ducks enjoying themselves among the white water-lilies. A Mr. Charles Henry, by the way, who owns a patch of land just there, constantly keeps a hundred men at work with his building and planting. May his work last long, and his capital never grow less! He has a fine patch of the natural wood, all of which grows on the north of the dales, sheltered from the north wind. These woods of his are a great relief. I can't help thinking that if the Killeries had plantations made at intervals, there would be no such "fiord" along the whole coast. Go and see the grand amphitheatre of hills into which you seem to enter as you near Leenane. Moolreagh, one of the hills, is two thousand seven hundred feet high, but its fine form makes it look far higher. Why not ships in that safe "ocean gorge" (as the tourists' book calls it), and mills of all kinds turned by the never-failing water-power of the hills, and a teeming population, each with his own patch of ground,

"won from the waste," which he and his might till "after hours"? It is melancholy to think that nothing is done here but a little tourists' stocking-knitting and lobster-catching; and that if a man like Mr. Henry stayed his hand, more still must emigrate or go into the workhouse. What folly! if, indeed, the strength of a country lie in its stalwart men and hearty women. What a sad spectacle, too, is an Irish workhouse. It is, go where you will, the biggest building to be seen about any country town. Sometimes the county lunatic asylum almost rivals it; sometimes a new convent runs it rather hard. Convents and workhouses! I know the two don't necessarily go together; yet in Ireland they stand in ominous proximity, and both look the newest samples of building and the best. If there must be workhouses, why not plant them in the midst of some bog, and feed the people well, insisting at the same time on their working well? In that way your workhouse would soon become self-supporting. It is astonishing how quickly most bog-land yields a tidy crop, and people working en masse could drain better than little cottiers working each man for himself. The only thing needful would be to give plenty of good food. A man can't drain bog, or do any other useful work in this world, on skillagolee.

Now, I've only told what I saw during this last brief "refresher" in Connemara; I have said nothing of the road by Lough Inagh, out of which lake rises a precipice twelve hundred feet high; nor of the islands, such as Inisbofin, which are a study in themselves, both as to scenery and antiquities; neither have I taken you to Delphi Lodge, on the Mayo side of the Killeries, in the glen leading to which are three small lakes, one of which, some two miles long, well deserves its name of Dhu Lough, for I never saw anything so wildly gloomy as the scenery amid which it lies. All I have wished to do is to point the district out. There is plenty there to occupy the pedestrian for a month; if he have his rod in his hand, and can use it, so much the better. The "Law Life" will charge him ten shillings a day for the lower lakes; but up the mountains the waters are mostly free, and even elsewhere the rules of the "Law Life" are not over-well enforced. My advice is, if you go, first go well through the country by car till you have "got its bearings." Then take knapsack, or better, if you have the means, buy a Connemara pony (he'll pay to export afterwards, if you don't knock him up, which you will be hardly able to do), and get over the ground more quickly. Anyhow, if you do nothing else, make the little run here indicated. Even if you only get the twenty hours in Connemara which I got this first week in August, you will have seen something which few parts of Europe, and certainly no part of the British Islands, can parallel. There are sweeter bits at Killarney, there are grander bits in the Highlands, there are bits more magnificent in Snowdonia or under Helwellyn, because you there have higher mountains; but there are no such

seventy miles of road in the United Kingdom as from Galway to Clifden, and round by Lennane and Maam to the Galway road again.

HYPOCRISY AND CANDOUR.

Tom says he always tells the truth,
Though an unpleasant duty;
While Jack, a less punctilious youth,
Would praise a Satyr's beauty.

But somehow, when you hear them both,
Their diff'rent manners trying,
You take Jack's praises, nothing loth,
And hope that Tom is lying.

You know that Jack is not sincere,
While Tom is full of virtue;
But one can *sometimes* please your ear,
The other's *sure* to hurt you.

Jack's ready lie has such success,
'Twill please you though you doubt it;
Tom never tells the truth, unless
You'd rather be without it.

Falsehood a paltry vice may be—
Plain-speaking may be grander—
But, though I hate Hypocrisy,
I loathe too fulsome Candour.

A NEW PORTRAIT-GALLERY.

It was once the fortune of the writer of these lines to employ a carpenter who, whenever he inserted a screw into any part of his work, always, before he did so, took the trouble of anointing the instrument with tallow or some other kind of grease, which he called the "friend." On being asked what was his motive for administering this unction, his reply was that he did it for the benefit of the person, whoever he might be, who should have, one of these days, to extract that same screw, and whose task this application of grease would render very much easier of execution than it otherwise would have been. There was a principle involved in the proceeding of this carpenter—in all respects a very honest man—which we are most of us inclined to lose sight of. He was acting for the benefit of posterity.

This small anecdote is appropriate here, because the project, the carrying out of which is to be urged in this paper, is one which, in some respects, affects those who will live after us more than it does ourselves. It does affect us too, or the case would be desperate; but it touches the interest of those who will walk on this stage, when we have walked off it. The project in question is the formation of a National Collection of Photographic Portraits of eminent and remarkable persons, to be got together and preserved in some public institution.

There are various opinions as to the value, and still more as to the satisfactoriness, of photographic portraits. Of some individuals it is said that they do not make good photographs.

People will even say—generally after having proclaimed that they know whose physiognomy it is that is presented before them—"Well! I should really not have known who it was intended for." Such critics will remark, moreover, looking disparagingly at the portrait before them: "It is not my idea of him," or "It looks too serious," or "too ferocious." "The hands," they will say, "are too big," or "the feet are out of all proportion." The criticism of the audience to which a photographic likeness is submitted may be of this sort, or even more severe yet; but it cannot be denied that that portrait, whether it excites approval or disapproval, is a reproduction of a face presented at a certain moment to the surface of a mirror which retained the image reflected upon it. Whether the face so reflected was truly reflected—whether it was presented under favourable or under unfavourable circumstances—whether the lights and shadows were so thrown upon it as to develop its beauties, or to bring out its defects—whether the view selected was the most characteristic or the most favourable—these are all points which may legitimately be called in question. One thing, however, is certain; the object that we see reproduced, was really presented before a plate chemically prepared to receive and to retain whatever was placed in front of it. A mechanical contrivance, like the photographic process, can neither invent nor omit; there may be defects in the working of that piece of machinery, there may be exaggeration in the size of the objects which happen to be nearest to the lens, there may be inaccuracy, produced by some trifling movement on the part of the sitter; but in the main we feel, in looking at a photographic portrait, that we know pretty well what the person who sat for it was like.

And, moreover, we certainly know that at least there has been no voluntary tampering with the face represented. There is a tendency in portrait-painters to humour their subjects a little. "This is an intellectual character," says the artist. "I must make the most of the forehead and the eyes, and reduce the lower part of the face, ever so little, in size." The artist does so, and a "commanding brow," and a "mouth and chin indicative of great refinement," are the result; together, probably, with a total deficiency of force, and a loss of individuality and character. We have had too many of these garbled representations of illustrious men. We want to see a remarkable man as he was; not as a portrait-painter thinks he ought to have been. If the hero were of a puny figure, and of a frail build, let us be made aware of it; if the man of genius had a disappointing forehead, let that be proclaimed also. We may learn something through such revelation, and correct our notions (generally very erroneous) of what is a disappointing forehead. We have most of us known instances of low and retreating foreheads from out of which great thoughts have issued, as we have of grand and ponderous brows behind whose mighty fastnesses there has

lurked a prodigious amount of stupidity and weakness. At all events, let us see the man as he was, and harmonise his work and his appearance as best we may. They will generally be found, on reflection, to correspond very closely.

No doubt an adherence to the peculiarities and individualities of his model is more aimed at by the portrait-painter now, than it was a few years ago. It is not now considered essential that a man should be eight heads high—that is, that his head should go eight times in his height from crown to heel; nor is it deemed indispensable that the form of a lady's mouth should approximate to that of the cupid's bow; but still, the "ought to be" is more considered than the lover of truth could wish, and it is to be feared that the faces of public characters are improved upon before they are hung up in Trafalgar-square, just as their speeches are said to be doctored before they reach us in the public prints.

It is because people have become so accustomed to this improving process that they are so apt to quarrel with their photographic portraits as they commonly are. They have been so long accustomed to have their eyes enlarged, and their noses, and mouths, and jaws reduced, that when they find themselves represented as they really are, they are apt to be disappointed and angry. It may even happen that, unless they are posed very carefully indeed, and at a considerable distance from the photographic apparatus, the more ignoble portions of their countenances will be unduly insisted upon, and that the "ought-not-to-be" qualities which their faces exhibit will even be slightly exaggerated. It is certain that photographic portraits do not flatter, and that, in the case of ladies especially, they cannot always be said even to do justice to the originals; nevertheless, their value is incalculably great, and most of us would rather see a photograph of some one concerning whom our curiosity has been powerfully excited than a painted portrait.

Suppose, for instance, that some one were to find out that photography was a much older invention than has generally been imagined. Suppose we were to learn that it had flourished in the Elizabethan age, and that a photographic portrait of Shakespeare, concerning whose authenticity there could be no doubt, had been discovered. With what prodigious haste we should all rush off to inspect it! What would then be the worth of all your Chandos portraits, and the rest of the miserably unconvincing likenesses of the poet, with which people try to satisfy themselves, and which are so entirely unsatisfactory, and so irreconcilable with what Shakespeare did, that one thinks it would be better to let them alone altogether, and turn them with their faces to the wall and have done with them. What wonderful revelations would be made to us, too. We should be so surprised at first to see how unlike this portrait was to the "gentleman with the turn-down collar and tassels," whom we know so much too well. We should be

perhaps disappointed, as well as surprised at first; but then, as we looked longer, we should get to see and understand it all. We should find somewhere—maybe in the eyes or round about them—some of that penetration which told him that "when love begins to sicken and decay, it useth an enforced ceremony," or that, to tortured Lear, the misery and degradation of "Mad Tom" could only be accounted for by his having "unkind daughters." What discoveries we should make, too, among those delicate markings about the mouth, which could not be wanting. What abundance of sarcastic power, yet how much of pity. What contempt for evil, what admiration of good, and withal what sympathy with suffering!

And if with this hypothetical portrait were associated others of such men as Watt, Harvey, Marlborough, Hogarth, Pitt, Nelson, what a national portrait-gallery that would be, and how—to use the theatrical phrase—it would draw! And yet just such a collection of modern illustrious persons might be formed now for the benefit of future ages.

What seems, then, to be wanted is, that, as we have already a national collection of painted portraits, so we should proceed to get together a collection of likenesses taken by the photographic process, to be chosen and preserved by persons selected especially on account of their fitness for the work, and who should be national servants in the employ of the public. This is not an undertaking which ought to be left to private enterprise; for, in that case, we should have no security that the portraits would be preserved at all—no assurance that they would not in time get to be destroyed or lost; while there would be every reason to fear that the portraits of those persons whose likenesses we most want might not be those which it would be most to the interest of the trade to preserve. It often happens that the portrait of a really remarkable personage will prove in the dealers' hands a less saleable commodity than that of some public favourite of the moment, concerning whose lineaments posterity will not care one single straw. If the photograph of a dancer, an acrobat, or a comic singer, sell better than that of a great philosopher or a luminary of science, we may be sure that the negatives of the dancer, the acrobat, or the comic singer, will be more carefully preserved and more closely looked after than that of the philosopher or scientific luminary.

There would be many important points which it would be necessary to consider in organising any such institution as this which we have been considering. It would be needful to ascertain—and to do this no amount of pains should be spared—which among the many photographic portraits taken of eminent persons was the best, and the most to be relied on. And in coming to a decision on this question, it seems only fair that the original of the portrait should have a voice. Supposing many portraits of a great author, for instance, to be in existence, he should be allowed to say by which he would

choose, and still more, by which he would *not* choose, to be represented for the benefit of posterity. If a man have had two photographs done of him, one of which, owing to some unfortunate combination of lights and shadows, makes him look like a murderer, while the other shows him as a respectable and amiable member of society, it would be hard if he were obliged to submit to be represented by the first of the two. It will be remembered by most persons who have had much experience of sitting for photographs, that at least one of their portraits has been suggestive of murderous tendencies in the original, while another has conveyed the idea of a simpering humbug. These unhappy results are oftener attributable to our own misdoing than we think. In sitting for our portraits we are apt to begin by trying to look preternaturally wise, and in making this attempt our features assume a homicidal cast. Horrified at this state of things, we smile, and behold the humbug appears! These two phases passed through, some of us, in the endeavour to steer clear of both extremes, and to resemble neither murderers nor hypocrites, are apt to fall into yet another pitfall, in some respects more terrible than the other two, and to contract an air of chronic imbecility. Suppose a dozen different portraits taken from the same original, each will probably differ in so many respects from all the others, that in some cases it might prove desirable to have more than one portrait of a single personage.

And the getting together of some such collection of national photographic portraits should by no means be put off as a thing which may be delayed for an indefinite period, and thought of "some of these days." Many eminent persons have already died since the art of photography came into existence, the negatives of whose portraits are in private hands—in the hands, that is, of professional photographers—who are continually taking as many impressions of them as they are able to find a market for. Such negatives should at once be sought out and bought up before it is too late; and if it be the case that there is no method by which they can be preserved, if it be in their very nature to fade away and perish, then would it not be well that before they do so, fac-simile engravings should be made from them, that they may be secured for ever?

As to this question of the durability of photographic portraits, and of the negatives from which they are taken, there seems to be diversity of opinion among professors. We all know that the portraits themselves are apt to fade. The private collections of these which most of us possess include not a few specimens which are but the ghosts of what they once were; and year by year we see portraits to which we attach the greatest value becoming more and more indistinct. It is said that in Paris and elsewhere certain discoveries have been made—and that recently—which will remove this great objection to photographic likenesses. It

may be so, or it may not. Time alone can prove. Meanwhile, until we know certainly that an imperishable photographic impression is an attainable thing, it is to the negative from which impressions can continually be obtained with which to replace the old ones as they become indistinct, that we naturally attach the greatest value.

The general opinion among practical men seems to be that, accidents apart, these negatives are *not* perishable. It seems probable that there is nothing inherently perishable in the thing itself. There is, however, nothing more liable to accidental injuries than one of these negatives. It is originally taken upon glass, the fraillest of all substances. Then again, the composition with which the completed negative is varnished, may be defective: in which case the surface will crack, to the utter destruction of the portrait. The smallest substance—what we familiarly know as a piece of grit—brought into contact with the delicate surface, may destroy it in a moment; while if it should come to be scratched or rubbed, there is an end of it.

Now, the case standing thus—the photographic negative being, in itself and when protected from external injury, as far as we know, a durable thing, but being in a pre-eminent degree liable to all sorts of accidents, any one of which may render it worthless—it seems to follow that, in cases where this negative is a valuable piece of property, not to say a treasure impossible to replace, it ought to enjoy every chance that careful guardianship can give it, of immunity from misadventure. Such immunity it certainly does not enjoy when left to encounter all the risks of the establishment of a professional photographer. The artist cannot attend to everything himself, but is compelled, perforce, to entrust the keeping of even his most valuable portraits to assistants and servants. Accidents are happening continually, and sometimes when he inquires for the negative of an especially eminent person, it is brought to him in two pieces, or with a great scratch across its surface from end to end. Of course we all know that by no system of human organisation can accident be wholly guarded against; but we also know that by the employment of precaution the danger to be apprehended from casualties may be reduced to a minimum. It is mainly by use that the security of negatives is endangered, as every time they are handled there is undoubtedly some risk of injury run. It follows that the less they are used, the less likely are they to receive harm. The negatives of any portraits included in a national collection would be but seldom used. It would be needful to take off some few impressions at first starting for the portrait-gallery itself, and also for preservation in public establishments in our own country towns, or in the colonies. These once supplied, the negative would be put away in some specially safe place, and no further use would be made of it until new impressions were required, either by reason of those originally taken being worn out, or in

consequence of the establishment of new institutions at home or abroad.

There is one element in this proposal which should always be kept in sight. The project is pre-eminently an economical project, and there would be no need to dip at all deeply into the national pocket. The space required for the exhibition of a collection of photographs would not be large. No new buildings would be needed, as there are plenty of existing institutions of which such an establishment might form a part. The chief outlay would be in the purchase of portraits already in existence, and the taking of new portraits. As to the staff of employed persons, it should be of the smallest. One practical man, thoroughly well acquainted with the technicalities of the art, would be required to keep the portraits, and to take new impressions, as new impressions might be required. A photographic establishment for the taking of portraits would not be desirable. Men of genius, and persons of rare gifts or accomplishments, are ordinarily difficult customers to deal with, and are especially hard to get hold of when they are wanted to sit for their portraits. They must be caught when they can be caught, and, if possible, when they are in pliant humour. They would never come in cold blood to a central establishment to be "taken" for the collection, nor, even if they were persuaded to do so, would a favourable likeness be likely to be got of them under such circumstances. Besides which, there would be great danger of monotony in the treatment of the subjects. The better plan would be to seek far and wide for the most successful photographs of such persons as should be thought worthy of being represented in the collection, and to buy up such portraits wherever they might appear. As to voluntary contributions, it would be necessary to exercise the greatest circumspection in admitting any such.

One word more concerning the practical advantages which might accrue to ourselves from the adoption of such a scheme, and enough will, for the present, have been said about it. There are plenty of living people who, by reason of their habitually leading a retired life, or from other causes, have had no opportunities of seeing some of the most distinguished men of their own day, but as to whose outward appearance they may yet feel a considerable amount of laudable curiosity. If the scheme under discussion were carried out, such people would have abundant opportunities of gratifying their curiosity, as, even if the main collection in the metropolis were inaccessible to them, copies of the portraits would be found in the public institutions of provincial towns, and so brought within easy reach of them. Men who had not seen the originals of these portraits would examine them with curiosity, and men who *had* seen the originals would find pleasure in comparing the portraits with the images preserved in their own memories; while not a few would feel a wholesome interest in showing the portraits of the great men of their own day to their children.

But even if this were not so—if this thing brought no gratification to us individually—would it not be worth doing for the good of generations to come? That wretched saying, "*après nous le déluge*," is a terribly popular one. It is one of the sayings from which no good has ever come. The old beehive motto, "*Sic vos non vobis*," is equally hackneyed, but very much less frequently acted upon. It is peculiarly applicable in this case.

WITH JEAN BAPTISTE.

Nor long ago, when sojourning in Montreal, and admiring, as every stranger fresh from the United States does, the beauty of its situation, the massiveness of its grey stone buildings, and its peculiarly French character, I expressed a wish to know something more of the life and character of the habitants, or descendants of the original French settlers, of the days before Wolfe and Montcalm, than could be obtained in the great towns and cities. The person to whom I addressed myself was a noted French Canadian, a member of the legislature and the government; and, though once in his hot youth, when William the Fourth was king, a rebel against British authority, one who, like many others of his countrymen, had ripened and mellowed into a satisfied, loyal, and honoured servant of the crown. "If you desire," he replied, "to see Jean Baptiste at home" (Jean Baptiste means a French Canadian, as John Bull means an Englishman), "you should visit some of the long villages in the neighbourhood of Quebec; or, better still, you should take the steamer for 'Three Rivers,' and thence proceed inland and explore the villages that lie between the St. Lawrence and the St. Maurice. The habitants are not modern Frenchmen, but Frenchmen of the ancien régime, such as the French of the old country were in the days of Louis Quinze, before the deluge of the great revolution had swept away the old ideas, the old prejudices, the old manners, and the old courtesies. There is no people like us left in the world; so simple-hearted, so little idolatrous of money, so unenterprising, so contented with mere life for its own sake, so honest, so devout, so obedient; and, I may add, so lazy and stagnant.

Similar information was given me by a stately French Canadienne, a lady of the very old régime, with manners that would have graced the court of the Grand Monarque. She had great contempt for modern ideas, and expressed her firm belief that gentlemen were fast becoming extinct. As for the habitants, she declared, they had become vulgarised and contaminated by their association with newly arrived immigrants; and, worst of all, with the "Bostonais," as she called the United States-men, a people without manners or education, and who, when they looked at anybody, said with their eyes, if not with their tongues, "Who cares for you? Am I not as good as you, and a great deal better?" "Forty years ago," she

added, "things were very different in Canada. The poorest habitant was in his heart a gentleman, and knew how to yield graceful, and not servile, deference to his superiors. He treated a lady as if she were a lady, and not as the Bostonians do—as if she were a silly creature, pleased to be taken notice of, as a dog might be. When the habitant paid his rent to his feudal superior, he dressed himself in his best, and came neat and clean into the presence of his landlord or landlady, and discoursed of the weather and the crops, or the news of the village; telling who was married and who was dead since his last visit, and doing his best to make himself agreeable. Now he comes in his working clothes, muddy and dirty, and smells of the farm-yard and the stable, with grimy hands, sits down without being asked, answers in monosyllables as if he had a grievance and was too surly to tell it, and altogether behaves more like a Bostonian than a Canadian. However, all are not equally bad. The Church still exercises its ancient influence over the people; and the women are the best, the purest, and the most modest in America." All things considered, this lady was of opinion that I would not regret a visit to the villages of the interior, "where, thank God," she said, "the people are not quite so Bostonised ('bostonise') as they are in Montreal."

Between Montreal and Three Rivers, half way to Quebec, the St. Lawrence offers nothing remarkable in the way of scenery, or anything of interest to the traveller, unless it be the wide expansion of its bed, which is known by the name of Lake St. Peter, and through which, at great cost, a channel has been dredged sufficiently deep to admit the passage of ocean-going steamers as large as the Scotia or the Persia. This work, in its first inception, was ridiculed and denounced as the impracticable idea of a romantic enthusiast; but Mr. John Young persisted in considering it not only practicable, but, considering the advantages it would bestow upon the city of Montreal, a very economic and profitable investment of the public money. He was neither to be turned from his purpose by sneers or delays, and lived to see his design carried out amid the applause and, it may be added, the gratitude of the whole community. If two similar designs—long ago advocated by the same gentleman—the widening and deepening of the Lachine and the Welland Canals, were carried out to the extent proposed, first-class steamers could ply between Liverpool and the great American lakes with as much regularity and comfort as they now ply between Liverpool and New York, and grain from the overflowing corn-fields of the bounteous West could reach the British manufacturing districts without the cost and delay of transhipment. But everything comes with time to those who know how to wait, and the Confederate Dominion of Canada will doubtless complete the work which the Province of Canada had not the spirit, or perhaps the means, to undertake.

The steamer that leaves Montreal at four in

the afternoon reaches the town of Three Rivers before midnight, and lands its passengers at the great hotel of the place, which overlooks the long reaches of the swiftly flowing river. Three Rivers takes its name from the fact that two branches of the St. Maurice, that rises six hundred miles away in the pine wildernesses of the Hudson Bay Company's territory, here unite with the St. Lawrence. The town, which next to Quebec is the oldest in Canada, contains a population of about seven thousand. It is one of the trading stations of the Hudson Bay Company, but its chief business is the receipt and despatch of timber floated down the long succession of the falls and rapids of the St. Maurice on its way to Quebec. For a person with a small income, with no means of increasing it, and who would be content with fishing and shooting for amusement, and with such dull society as a little town affords, Three Rivers may be recommended as a desirable place of residence. Fine fat fowls are to be bought in the market for two shillings a pair, the shilling representing only tenpence sterling; beef at fourpence per pound, mutton at two shillings and sixpence per quarter, and all other articles of first necessity at rates equally moderate. The neighbouring country is fertile and easily cultivated. Game and fish are abundant, and there are no restrictions upon the gun and the rod to interfere either with the sport or the appetite of him who uses them.

The town shortly before my visit had sustained a serious loss in the death of its most enterprising inhabitant, Mr. Turcotte, its representative in the Canadian parliament. Owing to this gentleman's energy, railroad communication had been opened up from the village of St. Gregoire, on the opposite bank of the St. Lawrence, with the Grand Trunk Railway at Arthursburg, a distance of thirty miles to the southward. He had also planned a railway from Three Rivers northward to Shawenegan, a distance of about twenty miles, and had built a monster hotel, on the American system, overlooking the upper falls. But the railway was uncommenced, the hotel was unfinished, and those who wished to feast their eyes on the glories of Shawenegan had to hire a vehicle, and take their provisions—edible and potable—along with them, for there was nothing to be had on the way but such as small country cabarets or estaminets could afford. On these points, however, there was no difficulty. Our party of five, two ladies and three gentlemen, were accommodated with a roomy vehicle—place for one on the box—with two strong, though gaunt, ungainly steeds, and a careful driver, who kept up a constant talk to his horses in French, and knew no word of English except the profane one that Béranger mis-spells,

*Quoique leurs chapeaux soient bien laids,
Goddam! moi, j'aime les Anglais!*

Our host of the hotel provided us with all the creature-comforts that hunger or thirst—or

luxury even—could desire; and at seven o'clock on a fine summer morning we started to explore the villages of the habitants, and to pic-nic at Shawenegan. The first village on the road was that of "Des Forges," where Mr. McDougall, a Highlander by birth or descent, has established a foundry that gives employment to a considerable number of people. In this part of the country the iron-ore lies thickly strewn over the surface, but had never been turned to account by the habitants until Mr. McDougall established himself among them. "Jean Baptiste," however, is not slow to follow if you show him the way, and the habitants, enlightened as to the value of the ore which they find on their farms, have nothing to do but to cart it to Des Forges and receive payment. Mr. McDougall makes from ninety to one hundred tons of iron per week, and finds a ready purchaser in the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada. The next place, six miles further on, is St. Etienne, the very type and model of a French Canadian village—a description of which may serve for a description of the hundreds that line the banks of the St. Lawrence, the Richelieu, the St. Jean, the St. Maurice, and other rivers. Nothing more unlike an English village can be imagined. There is no village green or common, with its sheltering elms, the playground of the young villagers, or the browsing-place of the donkeys, or the geese, if browsing (which I do not assert) be the proper word to apply to the grass-eating of those noblest of birds [for the dinner-table]. There is a village church, generally a substantial edifice, with a tin roof and steeple, that shine and shimmer in the bright sun as if they were of silver; but which is not visible to the whole people at once, like the spire or tower of an English hamlet, inasmuch as a village is generally six or seven miles long, and not a cluster of houses around some common centre as with us at home. No one house in a French Canadian village is much better than another, unless it be the cabaret or the post-office. No "squire" with a pretentious mansion overshadows his tenants; and even the doctor or the avocat is not better lodged than his neighbours, if, indeed, there be an avocat to be found at all. The reason of the extreme length of the villages is, that everybody must have a frontage, and that the "terres," as the farms or lots are called, are laid out either upon the banks of a river extending backwards or upon a high road. The frontage varies from two to four arpens, or from four hundred to eight hundred feet, and each terre has a depth of about a mile. The house invariably stands by the road or the river, and is generally constructed of rude logs of wood, the interstices being filled with mud or clay to keep out the wind and rain; and the whole scrupulously whitewashed both outside and in. Adjoining each house, and open to the road, is a four, or oven, in which in summer-time the goodwife boils her broth, cooks her meat, roasts her potatoes, or makes her tea and coffee, in the presence of the public, as it were, if there were any public

which cared to inspect her culinary arrangements. Among these simple people, as in France, the terre, or farm, on the death of the proprietor is usually divided equally among all the children; and as each insists upon having a frontage, and will not on any terms be pushed into the rear, the farms still retain their depth, but are diminished in width in proportion to the number of heirs. Thus a terre of four arpens, when divided among four children of a deceased habitant, is still a mile long; but is narrowed for each new proprietor to the width of two hundred feet. This ribbon-like piece of land is liable to still further subdivision, so that it is possible, unless a purchase or marriage should prevent and lead to the re-conjunction of any of these dissevered slips, that a man might inherit a farm which he could walk *across* in half a minute, but which he could not walk *along* in less than twenty. The style of farming is rude and primitive; it is an accusation brought against the habitants, that they farm no better than their progenitors in the days of Charlemagne; that they know nothing of improvements in agricultural implements, or of the rotation of crops; and that they are fast exhausting the land. They remain on the old farm from generation to generation, as fixed to the soil as if they were serfs, and as averse from change of domicile as the limpet upon the rock. There is abundance of good land in the wilderness to be had for almost nominal prices—land which the Anglo-Saxon and the Irish Celt are glad to purchase and reclaim, but which has no attraction for Jean Baptiste. He does not object to fell trees, or do the hardest work of the wilderness for wages; but he seems to have no inclination to do such work on his own account, or act in any way as a pioneer of civilisation, like the hardy Yankees, Englishmen, and Irishmen, who are every year adding new states to the already large dominion of the Union, and connecting the Atlantic with the Pacific by a continuous line of thriving and energetic communities. He seems to think that his lot has been cast in a pleasant place, in the Canada of his great-grandfathers, and loves the old terre as if the memories of a thousand years were clustered around it. He lives far better than his compeers in France, who are contented with black bread, an onion, and a pint of "vin blanc" for their ordinary diet, except on grand occasions; and scarcely ever dream of such a luxury as the "poule au pot," which good Henri Quatre desired to see in the cottage of every one of his subjects. The Canadian habitant has more abundant fare. In travelling along these lengthened villages, the grunt of the porker, the cackle of the hen, the crowing of the cock, and the gobble of the duck, are to be heard on every side; and fair average crops of maize, oats, rye, buckwheat, flax, lint, and tobacco, somewhat later in coming to maturity than similar crops in New England and New York, are to be seen at every interval between the cottages. Pork and poultry are the staple food of Jean Baptiste, but mutton

and beef are by no means unknown. The sheep browse in the fields behind the farm, and his wool is in request, not so much for the purposes of commerce, as for the supply of the needs of the household; for, in the cold winter days and the long winter nights, Madame Jean Baptiste, like Penelope and her daughters in the olden time, card, and spin, and weave the wool into warm but serviceable cloth, fit for the whole attire of the fathers and sons, and for the petticoats and cloaks of mothers and daughters. The habitant does almost everything for himself; makes and mends his clothes and shoes at home, weaves his own straw hat, extracts sugar from the sap of the abundant maple-trees that thrive so luxuriantly all over the country, dries and cures his own tobacco, distils his own execrable whisky (beer and wine he scarcely ever sees), makes his own soap, and, where there is much timber on the "terre," which is not available as lumber or for commercial purposes, burns down the trees and boils their ashes in iron caldrons to produce the potash which he can sell in Montreal and Quebec. From the produce of his potash, and the sale of his sheep and beeves, he has generally a surplus out of which to pay his willing dues to the Holy Mother Church which he loves so well, and in whose teachings he so implicitly believes, or the purchase for the women-folk of the well-beloved tea, and of the gewgaws and the finery that women desire and must and will have, from the age of five to seventy or eighty; or, if they live so long, to a hundred. He is far more ignorant of the meaning of the word taxes than George Cruikshank's superb John Thomas "of the calves," and only pays them in the shape of the *corvée*, so many days' labour per annum for the maintenance of the roads, whether "dirt" or "corduroy," that traverse his district. The most inattentive of travellers can scarcely fail to notice that the wives of the habitants are fresh, healthy, comely, and prolific. The children swarm at every door, and when madame peeps out, her curiosity excited by the noise of wheels, the clack of the driver's whip, and the constant talk he keeps up with his horses, to see who is passing, it is most probable that she has a baby in her arms, and three or four children of larger growth hanging about her apron, behind or before. And the dogs seem to be as plentiful as the children, and greet the traveller in such fashion and style as suit their age or character; sometimes, if they are young and foolish, rushing out to bark at the horses' heels; sometimes, if of maturer years, intoning their salutation in their throats, without stirring from their usual snoozing-places; or, if they are old, experienced, and philosophic, lifting their heads a little in the sunshine, surveying the passing vehicle with lazy interest, and then lying down again to sleep, perchance to dogmatise on the ways of men. Another noticeable and agreeable peculiarity is the love of flowers with which these fair *Canadiennes* seem to be possessed, and the abundance and beauty of the specimens which

they rear at their windows. The flowers which adorn their gardens are not many. Jean Baptiste wants the garden for use, and not for ornament, so madame makes her garden at the window, and cultivates her geraniums, pelargoniums, lobelias, cinerarias, roses, and lilies with such care and success as to convert the one room of her modest cottage into a veritable bower, as richly adorned during the season of flowers as if it were, barring the other furniture, the boudoir of a duchess. The day on which our party passed through St. Etienne happened to be a gala day—the day of the *première communion* of all the little lasses of the village, of nine years old and upwards—a day looked forward to by these tiny charmers with as much pleasant anticipation as at a later period they doubtless look forward to that other day when they shall also be dressed in white, and wear long white veils and white wreaths around their foreheads, and kneel before the priest at the altar at even a holier communion. The little ones whose domicile was in close proximity to the church walked to the communion dressed in white muslin, with white ribbons streaming behind, and with long white veils, looking—with the glow of health and excitement on their cheeks and eyes, and in their whole demeanour—like so many cherubim—minus the wings and plus the more ordinary helps to locomotion—and all of them, together with the fathers, and mothers, or other elders who accompanied them, had a smile and a graceful recognition for the passing strangers. Those who lived at longer distances from the church were driven in charette, farm-cart, gig, or calèche; and the drivers, the fathers or brothers of the little communicants, invariably lifted their hats to us as we passed them on the road, an act of courtesy which we as invariably returned. Around the church, at every available space, were stationed the vehicles which had discharged their human freight, suggesting by their numbers what was quite evident enough before, that the *Canadiennes* were by no means, like their American sisters further to the south, of an unprolific race, or dependent in any degree upon the immigration from Europe to keep up the parity of numbers between the annual births and deaths. To maintain the equilibrium is as much as the native-born Americans appear to be able to do, and they do not manage even *this* in some cities of the Union; whereas among the French Canadians the tendency is to a superabundant population, as in Ireland and the western isles of Scotland. "How it comes, let doctors tell," as Burns says, and doctors or philosophers *will* have to tell it, sooner or later, however displeasing the explanation may be to the tender, delicate, little ladies of the States, who dislike walking, live in heated rooms, and eat sweetstuff till their health suffers and their teeth become unserviceable as well as unornamental.

Jean Baptiste does not trouble himself very much about politics, and generally takes them, with his religion, from the priest. Thirty-five

years ago, however, the case was different, and he gave the British government a good deal of trouble. Alarmed lest he should be Anglicised, and Protestantised, and "improved off the face of the earth," as the Yankees express it, he declared himself a rebel, took to arms, got together a small but valiant host, with which he defied John Bull for several months, and altogether behaved himself in a manner which, if it did not show much prudence, showed a very considerable amount of "pluck." The British government has never been in the habit of negotiating or parleying with rebels in arms; but having put down Jean Baptiste's rebellion by the strong hand, and got possession of the bodies of some of the most eminent leaders, it began to inquire in all good faith and right feeling what were the grievances, real or supposed, which had driven a person usually so quiet, so good, and so amiable as Jean Baptiste, to so desperate a resort. The result was, that Jean Baptiste was found to be not altogether without ground of complaint, and that he had solid grievances—not caused so much by the injustice as by the ignorance of the British government, and the assumption, by his fellow-colonists of British descent, of a superiority over him which he was not inclined to allow. Generous Mr. Bull did the best he could between the two parties, reformed abuses, modified the pre-existing arrangements between the British and French Canadians, and put the finishing touch to this liberal and enlightened policy by pardoning Jean Baptiste's generalissimo, Mr. Papineau, and the other civil and military chiefs of the abortive rebellion. The wise policy bore good fruits; rebels became loyalists, and Mr. Papineau himself, who still lives a prosperous and a venerable gentleman, was not only reconciled to the monarchical rule of Great Britain, but grew to be its staunchest friend and supporter.

From Three Rivers to the lumber station of Mr. Rousseau, on the bank of the St. Maurice, at which we had to take either a canoe or a scow to be paddled or rowed across the lake-like bend of the river to the path that leads to the upper fall of Shawenegan, was a drive of five hours, through a country sandy, but not unfruitful, that lay in a plateau for five or six miles, and thence rose by a steep ascent of a couple of hundred feet to another plateau of similar width, followed by another bank and another plateau, suggesting a succession of former sea levels in the ancient history of our planet, when the uplands of Lake Erie were the shores of the ocean, when Niagara was not, and when what are now Canada, Maine, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, were more than half submerged, and what was visible of them were islands of an immense archipelago. These plateaux and shelving banks stretch inwards towards that great inland ocean which few people have ever seen, called Hudson's Bay, for hundreds of miles—at least the geological books say so, and we may as well believe them. Mr. Rousseau had been apprised of our coming, and canoes and a scow

were in readiness. The ladies of the party did not like the fragile look of the canoes, so the scow, in deference to their timidity, was chosen for our transit. Laden with our provender and our drink, both of which the boatmen undertook for an extra gratuity to carry up the steep path on the other side, we were speedily impelled across to the mountain-path, that led by a zigzag of three-quarters of a mile through the brushwood and the forest to the skeleton of poor Mr. Turcotte's hotel. We were advised not to skirt along the bank to see the falls from the level of the river, but to ascend to the highest point and view them at their very best. We paid due deference to this local judgment, and were duly rewarded for our acquiescence. Though the St. Maurice was not at its full, and the depth of water not above one-half of its usual average, there was more than sufficient to produce a cataract that has not its peer in Europe, and very few in America; one that, were it within five hundred miles of London or Paris, would be annually visited by tens or hundreds of thousands of delighted tourists. The day will doubtless come when the far-seeing design of Mr. Turcotte will be completed, when there will be a railroad from Three Rivers to Shawenegan, connecting the latter point by the ferry over the St. Lawrence to St. Gregoire, with the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada, and consequently with the entire railway system of the United States, when the great hotel will be completed and furnished, and when as many travellers as now go forth from all points of the compass to behold Niagara in its glory, will flock to Shawenegan in the drowsy and oppressive heats of the American summer to behold a smaller but still a magnificent fall in its beauty and splendour—to feast their eyes with the sight of the cooling waters rushing over the precipices with everlasting music, and suggesting to the most prosaic mind:

To stand before them reverent and dumb,
And hear their voice discoursing to the soul
Sublime orations, tuned to psalmody;
High thoughts of peril, met and overcome
Of power, and beauty, and eternity,
And the Great God who bade the waters roll.

Our small party had the large banquetting-room of the hotel to ourselves—a room unglazed, only partially boarded, and more partially roofed, and encumbered with the shavings and chips and other signs of the late presence of carpenters and joiners. Our banquetting-table, overlooking the Falls, was a pile of deal boards, our seats logs of timber, to be yet, perhaps, wrought into the edifice as jambs or joists or cross-trees of the roof; and our waiters were the Canadian boatmen, who had little to do but to bring us pitchers of water from the foaming torrent to mingle with our wine. They spoke no word of English, were very grateful for the remnants of our feast, but particularly grateful for the bottle of good claret with which we presented them, a wine of which they had heard but had never seen or tasted before, and which they were delighted to know had been

imported from France. "Tiens," said one, "and is the bottle French also? and the bouchon?" On being assured that the corks and the bottles were both from Bordeaux, they united in asking permission to take the empty bottles home with them as a remembrance of the old country. On being told that it was doubtful whether the champagne bottles or the champagne inside of them had ever been in France, they declined to encumber themselves with such spoil, but affectionately hugged the claret bottles, and took them down to the boat and carefully stowed them away. "And what will you do with them?" said I. "They are for Jacqueline," replied the elder boatman—"pour mon épouse. We shall use them every day instead of jugs or pitchers for our water or our milk, and when not in use they shall stand upon our mantelpiece among the ornaments."

On our return late at night to Three Rivers, I discovered on alighting that a Scottish plaid, of shepherd tartan, which I had purchased in my youth in the good town of Inverness, a plaid that had since those days travelled with me over nearly half the globe, that had been my pillow, my cushion, my blanket, and my mantle, that had borne the pelting of many a pitiless storm on mountain-top and in mid-ocean, while I had walked or sat dry and cozy beneath it—a plaid which long acquaintanceship and companionship had made worth twenty times as much to me as a newer and fresher garment—was nowhere to be found. It had been placed in the vehicle for the service of the ladies—for protection against rain or cold; but neither rain nor cold had rendered its employment necessary. What had become of it? Had it been jolted out in the ruts of the dirt-road or the ridges of the corduroy? Or had it been stolen while our vehicle was left unprotected during our picnic on the steeps of Shawenegan? No one could tell. The driver could give no information, but admitted that during the whole time we were absent at the Falls, he was either busy with his own dinner or that of his horses, and that he had left the carriage and its various contents of shawls and overcoats without watch or supervision. On mentioning the loss to the courteous French Canadian gentleman, the resident agent at Three Rivers of the lumberers of St. Maurice, and hinting that there were but two ways in which the missing article could have gone astray, and that it was just possible it might have proved too great a temptation for some poor habitant, male or female, to resist, his countenance grew suddenly dark. "Oh no," he said, with serious emphasis, "you must not say that. You do not know our people. There is not so honest a people in the world. There is not, and never was, and never will be, a thief, young or old, big or little, male or female, among them. If you dropped a purse of gold on the highway, the finder would immediately take it to the curé of the parish for restitution to the owner. Oh no. The shawl is lost, and will be found. Leave the affair to me. You must not leave Three Rivers with a suspicion

on your mind that there could be any dishonesty among our poor, our good habitants." I must own that I felt quite ashamed of myself, and endeavoured to soothe his wounded pride by every excuse and apology I could think of. Having given him a precise description of the missing article, I added that I would cheerfully pay a reward of as many dollars as he might name to the finder. This offer had well-nigh made matters worse. "A reward for doing right! Oh no," he added, "that is not our way in Canada. You must not think of such a thing." I saw that I was wrong again, and he saw also that I was sorry, and generously forgave me. Two days afterwards the plaid was returned with the compliments of the curé of St. Etienne, and a note stating that it had been found by a young girl in the road, and brought to him the same evening for restitution to the owner. With that base feeling so common among Britons that money is the best and only recompense for a good action, I was anxious to send the good curé a few dollars as a contribution towards the infant school—if there were one—or the poor-box, or the hospital. "Do nothing of the kind," said the merchant of Three Rivers; "why attempt to spoil and demoralise a good and simple people? You might as well reward them for eating their dinners with a good appetite, as for performing what to them appears a matter of the simplest duty." So the money was not sent, and I came away from the villages of the habitants with the impression, which time is not likely to efface, that a happier and more innocent people was not easily to be found on the face of the new continent, or the old one either.

DEATH IN THE DOCK.

On the 28th of April, 1794, a messenger from the chief secretary's office, with four policemen, entered Hyde's Coffee-house, College-green, Dublin. The entrances to the house had been watched through the night, and the appearance of the messenger had been anxiously awaited by at least one resident in the hotel. This person was a London attorney, named Cokayne, who had arrived in Dublin on the 1st of April with a friend of ten years' standing, the Reverend William Jackson, a clergyman of the Church of Ireland but apparently without a cure. Jackson slept in the room next to that occupied by Cokayne, and opening on the same passage. The messenger addressed a few words in whispers to Cokayne, who, pale and trembling, met him on the stairs. The whole party proceeded to the corridor, with which Jackson's room communicated. Cokayne begged leave to remain outside. The messenger and his assistants entered. The noise awakened Jackson. Starting up, he endeavoured to seize some papers piled upon a table beside his bed. He had cleared that table the night before, and now saw at a glance that treachery had been at work. The messenger

caught Jackson's hands, and motioning to his assistants to secure the papers, read aloud a warrant addressed to Tresham Gregg, keeper of Newgate, directing him to hold in safe custody the Reverend William Jackson, clerk, late of London, charged with high treason, and, specially, with inducing the king's enemies in France to invade his realm of Ireland.

Jackson had proceeded to France three years before to collect evidence in the famous case of the Duchess of Kingston. That business brought him into connexion with some of the leading spirits of the revolution. He remained in Paris in habits of intimacy with some members of the French convention, and either at his own suggestion, or through their influence, was commissioned to ascertain the sentiments of the lower classes in England and Ireland towards the French republic, and should he find them favourable, to prepare certain agents of the French convention in both countries for the landing of an invading force. A relative of Jackson, named Stone, had been long settled in Paris, and engaged in business there. He had a brother, resident in London, and an assistant, bearing the name of Beresford, married to the sister of Archibald Hamilton Rowan, who, when Jackson arrived in Ireland, was lying in Newgate under a charge of sedition. Stone furnished Jackson, on his departure from Paris, with letters of introduction to Horne Tooke and Doctor Crawford. Armed with these credentials, Jackson reached London, and immediately proceeded to execute his commission. He renewed his intimacy with Cokayne, and employed him as his agent and confidential secretary. Jackson's communications with the convention were addressed at first through Stone, and then through Cokayne, to Monsieur Chapeaurouge, marchand, Hambourg, under cover to Messrs. Texier, Angeli, and Massav, Amsterdam, in a third envelope directed to Monsieur Daubeduscaille, Hambourg. The letters were written in commercial style. "Business" meant Jackson's enterprise; "goods" denoted provisions for the expected army of invasion; "Magnet" stood for the French department of marine; "the baby" was the young republic; and so on. These letters were copied out by Cokayne, Jackson alleging that he owed money in England, where his own handwriting was well known. Throughout the correspondence, Stone's name was transposed into Enots, and Jackson named himself Thomas Popkins.

Two elaborate despatches from Jackson to the convention are extant, and possess a singular interest in reference to the recent Fenian conspiracy. They are written with great ability, and, as far as England is concerned, bear the impress of candour and truth. As the result of long-continued and minute inquiry, Jackson states that although the English people were weary with a war against France, which brought the nation hollow fame but substantial loss, they entertained a deeply rooted hatred towards the French republicans. He

declares that ninety-nine men out of every hundred would start to their feet in arms to drive an invader of the sacred English land into the sea. Any invasion of England would unite all classes and parties in determined opposition, and no sacrifice would be considered too great to protect the inviolability of the soil. He artfully recommends the convention to disarm the hostility of the English people by liberating at once, and without conditions, all English prisoners, to restore to them their property, and to transmit them with all honour and respect to England. He suggests that the convention should proclaim their anxious desire for peace, and their desire to live on terms of amity with the British nation. But under no circumstances did he think it possible to set the populace in array against their government and constitution.

But in Ireland, Jackson believed the convention had the fairest prospects of success. The organisation known as that of the "United Irishmen" prevailed in every part of the kingdom, and possessed agents in the army, the navy, and all public departments. The servants in private families of power and influence were members of the fraternity. Theobald Wolfe Tone had just accomplished, as it seemed, the difficult task of effecting an alliance between the Dissenters of the north and the Roman Catholics of the south. Jackson estimates the Protestant Episcopalians at four hundred and fifty thousand, the Dissenters at nine hundred thousand, and the Roman Catholics at three million one hundred and fifty thousand—an enumeration which proves his sagacity and knowledge of the country at the time. The Dissenters, under which name he includes the Presbyterians of the north, were, he asserts, to a man, republicans. The Roman Catholics of the south were thoroughly discontented and disloyal, ready to welcome any invader. The great mass of the people would receive the French into fraternity the moment they appeared, because while the government of England was thoroughly national, that of Ireland was provincial. In addition to the natural love of change, the great bulk of the nation was actuated by hatred of the English name. The gentry and clergy were more tyrannical and aristocratic than the nobles whom the republicans had annihilated in France. The English government was solely a government of force in Ireland, and would crumble to pieces before any power of adequate strength at the first collision. The people had received arms from France, and were efficiently drilled. Their organisation was complete, and they awaited with ill-concealed impatience the arrival of a force sufficiently great to give them confidence. The moment such a force appeared, Ireland would be in a blaze, and the English dominion at an end.

On the 1st of April, the day of Jackson's arrival in Dublin, Danton and his colleagues were murdered in Paris, and the sanguinary Robespierre ruled the French republic. Jackson was

soon acquainted with this change of masters, and believing that Robespierre in the first flush of power would see the advantage of distracting England by exciting a rebellion in Ireland, redoubled his activity. He and Cokayne were hospitably received by a Mr. MacNally, a barrister, who took a foremost place in defending prisoners arraigned for high treason. Through this gentleman, an arrangement was effected for the introduction of Jackson to Archibald Hamilton Rowan. The letters addressed by Stone to Horne Tooke and Dr. Crawford had never been delivered, and they now served as certificates of Jackson's fidelity to "the cause." A long and anxious deliberation ensued in Rowan's "lodgings" in Newgate. Jackson used all means of persuasion to induce Wolfe Tone to proceed as the envoy of the Irish republicans to Paris. Tone hesitated, and at last persistently refused. He hinted something about five hundred pounds, but Jackson replied that the "French nation was as generous as brave." This did not satisfy Tone. Then a Dr. Reynolds was appealed to, also in vain; and at last Jackson penned those two reports on public feeling in England and Ireland, which condemned him.

But almost from the moment of his landing in England, every movement made by Jackson was known to the government. Cokayne furnished Mr. Pitt with complete copies of Jackson's correspondence. The more recent letters were written as if in reference to a lawsuit in which Jackson was engaged, but Cokayne possessed the key and sold it. He assured Mr. Pitt that he was induced to betray his friend through motives of the purest patriotism, but he said something more. Alleging that Jackson owed him a debt of six hundred pounds, which he could not afford to lose, he reasoned that if Jackson should be executed through his information, the debt would never be recovered. William Pitt understood the hint and the man. He assured Cokayne he should be no loser by his patriotism. From that hour Cokayne accompanied Jackson as his shadow. He never left his side. Every letter, document, or word of Jackson's was immediately communicated to government. The moment the paper on the state of Ireland was penned, and placed in Cokayne's hands to be copied like the rest for transmission through the post-office, Cokayne conveyed it—while Jackson slept—to Mr. Hamilton, private secretary to the lord-lieutenant. That gentleman took a press copy of the original, and then returned it to Cokayne, directing him to post it in the usual way. The letter was, by order, intercepted, and then the authorities struck the meditated blow.

The arrest was made, and Jackson was lodged in the jail of Newgate, on the 28th of April, 1794. The indictments were not formally laid until the 23rd of June. On the 30th of June, Jackson pleaded "Not Guilty." Then the trial was deferred until the 7th of November. It was again postponed to the 20th of January,

1795, and once more to the 23rd of April. Nearly a year had elapsed from the arrest of Jackson, and so long a delay was unusual in those troubled times. It was expected, probably, that in the interval some damning evidence might be procured against Hamilton Rowan and others suspected of complicity with Jackson's design. But Hamilton Rowan escaped from Newgate in November, 1794, through the agency of a government informer, and then, at length, preparations were made for Jackson's trial.

The court was formed of the Earl of Clonmell, Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, Mr. Justice Downes, and Mr. Justice Chamberlain. Mr. Justice Bond was absent. The names of the leading counsel for the accused are remarkable in Irish history. Amongst them are found those of John Philpott Curran, George Ponsonby, L. MacNally, and Thomas Addis Emett. The case from the first was clear against the prisoner. There were the letters and the reports, originals and copies. It was proved, indeed, that Cokayne swore his last deadly information before the privy council under a menace from the Lord Chief Justice. "Remember, sir, you are in our power as to committing you if you do not swear." The case against the prisoner hinged upon the evidence of Cokayne; but the court decided that in Ireland one witness was sufficient to condemn a man of treason, though two were required in England. At four o'clock in the morning of the 26th of April the jury found Jackson "Guilty." They recommended him to mercy; but the Lord Chief Justice exclaimed that they had done so "only" through compassion: a plea not influential with such a judge. Turning to the jailer, who stood beside the condemned, he said, "Jailer, take that man away, and let him be brought up here in four days."

The four days slowly but surely passed hour by hour away, and then, on the morning of the 30th of April, Jackson was conveyed to the Court of King's Bench to hear his doom pronounced. He had made some allusions to suicide, and therefore was guarded strictly. His food was always cut in pieces for him, the jailer fearing to entrust him with a knife and fork. "The man who did not fear death," said Jackson, "can never want the means of dying. So long as his head is within reach of the prison-walls he can prevent his body being suspended to scare the community." A partisan of the government of the day saw Jackson as he passed on his way to the court. This person remarked to one of Jackson's counsel, "I always said Jackson was a coward, and I am not mistaken. His fears have made him sick. I observed him, as the coach drove by, with his head out of the window, vomiting violently." His friend hurried into court only to witness a most appalling scene. Jackson's frame quivered rather than trembled, but his mind was firm and collected still. With clammy and nerveless fingers he tried to press the hand of his counsel, and

sadly smiling, whispered the words of Pierre, "We have deceived the senate." The Chief Justice, perceiving the condition of the prisoner, thought of remanding him, but the Attorney-General prayed for judgment. Then "the Reverend William Jackson was set forward." All eyes were directed towards him. His body teemed with profuse perspiration, the steam rose from his hair, the muscles of his face twitched in convulsions, his eyes were nearly closed, and when at intervals he opened them the dull dry light of death glared out of them. Ordered by the court to stand up, his mind strove to command his failing body. He rose, but tottered and reeled as if about to fall. At last he crossed his arms tightly over his breast, and rocking to and fro awaited the traitor's dreadful sentence of doom. When the clerk of the court directed him to hold up his hand, he strove to raise it, but the powerless arm dropped instantly at his side. When the clerk demanded, in the usual form, "what he had now to say why judgment of death and execution thereon should not be awarded against him according to law," Mr. Curran rose and moved an arrest of judgment. A legal argument of some length ensued. All the while the prisoner grew worse and worse; he presented the aspect of a living corpse. Mr. Curran proposed that he should be remanded, as his state of body rendered communication between him and his counsel, impossible. Lord Clonmell thought it would be lenity to dispose of the sentence with all speed. They opened the windows of the court, and the cold air came rushing in. But the spirits of Death gathered closer round him, and now he fainted. He sank down in the dock. The crowd heard the hollow sound of his convulsive movements against the panelling. The closing scene is thus described:

Lord Clonmell: "If the prisoner is in a state of insensibility, it is impossible that I can pronounce the judgment of the court upon him."

Thereupon, Mr. Thomas Kinsley, an apothecary, who was in the jury-box, said he would go down to him. He stooped down over the dock, felt Jackson's pulse, and then turning round towards the judge, declared that the prisoner was certainly dying. By order of the court, Mr. Kinsley was sworn.

Lord Clonmell: Are you in any profession?

Mr. Kinsley: I am an apothecary.

Lord Clonmell: Can you speak with certainty of the state of the prisoner?

Mr. Kinsley: I can; I think him verging to eternity.

Lord Clonmell: Do you think him capable of hearing his judgment?

Mr. Kinsley: I do not think he can.

Lord Clonmell: Then he must be taken away. Take care that in sending him away no

mischievous be done. Let him be remanded until further orders; and I believe it is as much for his advantage, as for all of yours, to adjourn.

But the further orders never were delivered; the case of the prisoner had been already transferred to another tribunal. The sheriff, pale and horror-stricken, informed the court that the man was dead.

All rose and hurriedly left the court. The jailers laid the corpse straight on the floor of the dock, and hastened away. Many a man dead by the execution of the law had they seen, but never such a sight as this. All through the night, the dead lay there, a guard of soldiers keeping silent watch. There is a story that at midnight a weeping woman stole in like a spirit, kissed the cold lips, clasped the rigid hands, and vanished. Next day an inquest was held; the body contained a large quantity of metallic poison. The jailer swore that on the preceding day, a little before the prisoner was brought up to court, he found him with his wife, greatly agitated, and vomiting violently. "I have taken some tea," said Jackson, "which has disagreed with me." He had died of poison, and baffled the law. Whether it was to save himself and his family from the shame of an ignominious execution, or to preserve his property from confiscation, he had hurried to the final Court of Appeal. In his pocket, as he lay dead, were found some passages from the penitential Psalms, in his own handwriting.

Such a scene could never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. Few, however, could imagine the effect it had upon the judge. Here is his "note," written with his own hand on the very night of Jackson's death, when the eyes of the corpse were rigidly fixed upon the ceiling of the court:

"April 30, 1795.—Recollect the death of *that* Jackson, at the moment that judgment was about to be pronounced upon him. This should make a new judicial era in your life. As to regiment, diligence, and exercise, remember to ride and walk as much, to eat and sleep as little, as possible; to read law as much, to idle as little as you can, and never to fret at all; to laugh, and smile as much, to frown and sulk as little, as may be. Never to be drunk. Put yourself into no person's power. Live as long and as happy as you can. Turn each moment to the best account, and make the most of each good occasion, and the best of every bad one. Look to God and yourself only."

What a comment on so fearful a tragedy, and written by a judge's hand!

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MABEL'S PROGRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

BOOK V.

CHAPTER III. A ROMEO INCOGNITO.

CLEMENT, meanwhile, profoundly unconscious of the emotions of anger and curiosity he had excited in Mrs. Hutchins's breast, was strolling along the hot, dusty streets with some leisure on his hands which he did not well know how to dispose of. He had been to his office, and had found that the expected letters that he was to have answered had not been received. They could not now arrive until the following evening. He would have returned to Walter's lodgings, but his knowledge of his brother's habits forbade him to expect to find him at home so soon. He had turned westward, and was wandering on in a purposeless way, when his progress was arrested by a crowd assembled beneath a portico blazing with lights, and in front of which cabs and carriages kept drawing up in quick succession, and with a mighty clatter.

Looking at the building, towards which a steady tide of people was moving, his eye was caught by the words "Romeo and Juliet" in conspicuous letters. With a blind impulse, scarcely conscious of what he did, he entered the pit door with the stream, and in a few seconds had paid his money, and was pressing onward for a seat like the others.

The performances had commenced with a short, trifling piece, and the green curtain had just fallen, preparatory to rising on the tragedy. The band was playing a lively waltz, with much sharp clashing of cymbals, and metallic braying of wind instruments. The music was strangely out of tune with Clement's mood, and yet it strung his nerves to a pitch of high excitement. His heart beat quickly, and his foot mechanically kept time to the rhythm of the dance tune. He had found a place close against the dress-boxes at one side of the theatre, and had pressed the soft felt hat he wore down over his eyes, with a dread of being recognised, which his reason told him was groundless and absurd. Two young men of the smart clerk species were seated immediately before him, and kept up a running fire of talk. The performance they had come to witness appeared to be the last thing in their thoughts. Clement listened vacantly

to their babble, in which one "Jim" played a conspicuous though unintelligible part. As the music drew to a close, winding up with a final crash like twenty tinsmiths' shops in full work, a white-haired man near him, seeing him without a playbill, offered his own, and began to speak.

"Seen the noo Juliet, sir?" asked the white-haired man.

"No."

"*Not* seen her? Ah! more have I. But I'll tell you what; I've seen Miss O'Neil, sir, and I don't think we shall look upon *her* like again in a hurry."

Clement having nothing to say, said nothing.

"Much of a play-goer, sir?"

"No."

"*Not* much of a play-goer? Ah! more am I, now. But I'll tell you what, sir; I used to be, in the *parmy* days—the good old times—the days of yore, sir, as I call 'em, when acting *was* acting. Days of yore indeed, sir; too truly yore, as I say."

The white-haired man continued to repeat the word "yore" with an unctious apparently derived from his own very hazy comprehension of its meaning. Clement, feeling strongly averse to being drawn into a discussion on the present state of the British drama, was relieved when a little tinkling bell sounded, and the great curtain rose slowly with a rustling, creaking sound.

The first scenes of the play passed quietly. Mr. Alaric Allen, as Mercutio, was received with a burst of applause, and his brilliant, picturesque costume, and spirited, easy manner, were much approved of by the white-haired man, who yet made comparisons, not wholly to the advantage of the modern actor, between him and some forgotten celebrity of the "days of yore."

"As the time for Juliet's entrance drew near, a little thrill of excitement ran round the house. Even the two smart clerks ceased their whispered conversation about "Jim," and addressed their smug faces to the stage. The critical play-goer folded his arms, and settled himself in his seat with the air of one whose weighty duty it now was to give judgment on the new performer. As to Clement, when the nurse called "Juliet!" he was seized with a sensation of terror, strong enough to have induced him to rise up and run away had

such a proceeding been in any way possible. But a moment more—a hush of expectancy—and the theatre rang with loud, reiterated plaudits, and his eyes were fixed spell-bound upon the stage. No running away now. He could not have stirred to save his life.

A slight, girlish creature, lithe and graceful of form, with a shining, pearly, satin robe falling around her in rich folds, whereon there was a delicious, ever-varying play of light and shade. A round, well-poised head, whose pure outline was well displayed by the simple arrangement of her dark hair. A face, not perfectly regular in feature, but so instinct with genius, lighted so manifestly by a bright soul within, as to impress all those who looked upon it with a sense of the highest beauty. The brow was candid and smooth; the eyes innocently vivacious as a child's. Only in the delicate mouth there was a suggestion of sadness; a little drooping curve that told of capacity for suffering, and hinted all the pathos and the passion which that bright countenance had power to express. This was Juliet—Juliet as she might have been seen in the flesh centuries ago in old Verona, and who now stood bowing with a sober, modest grace in acknowledgment of the loud greeting of a crowd of nineteenth-century Englishmen. Then there was silence, and she spoke.

There are voices that speak to the ear, and flatter the sense with sweetness, yet move one no more than the melodious tinkle of a musical-box. Other voices vibrate subtly through the hearer's heart, and steal upon his inmost sympathies. Such a voice was Juliet's, pure, fresh, thrilling; with, at times, a little natural tremor in its tone like the *shimmering* of the air on a sultry summer's day. Upon one hearer's heart, at least, that voice fell like sweet music, and thrilled it to the core. Was it pain or ecstasy to see her once again? To see her thus, beautiful, brilliant, wielding the sceptre of genius in her girlish hand, compelling all around to own its power for the moment, even though the spell were but of brief duration—and as far removed from *him*, as the silver moon that was shining then above the flaring gas-lights of the theatre! He sat like one in a dream throughout the whole play. The white-haired man vainly tried to elicit his opinion of the new actress. The young clerks' prating fell unheeded on his ear. Once only was he aroused from his trance. It was when at the termination of the second act, the door of a private box was thrown noisily open, and the sound attracting his attention, he involuntarily looked up and beheld the entrance of the new comers. The next instant he started back and shrank down into the shade. In the front of the box sat Lady Popham, bejewelled, bejewelled, bedizened after her manner, with the great gold eye-glass in full force. Near to her, with his back to the stage, sat Arthur Skidley, negligently scanning the house through an opera-glass. And behind her ladyship's chair, his pale handsome face and black hair relieved against the dark red lining of the box, lounged Alfred Trescott. His mood seemed to be unusually subdued and silent, and

he bent down now and then to listen, or reply to the restless old lady's remarks, with a kind of languid deference that did not ill become him.

Clement's pulse beat quicker on the next occasion of Juliet's coming on to the stage. "Will she betray any consciousness of his presence?" was the first thought that flashed through his mind; and then he contemned himself bitterly for a fool. The question was soon answered. Juliet was Juliet still. All her faculties were absorbed in the portrayal of the varying, swiftly changing passions of love, joy, grief, terror, despair. With every scene the enthusiasm of the audience rose; until, at the final fall of the curtain, the cheers were overwhelming. The heroine of the night was led forward to bow her thanks, and to receive sundry bouquets tossed in quick succession on to the stage. These she took simply; without either exaggerated demonstrations of gratitude, or offensive indifference. Absence of affectation, indeed, marked all she did. As she left the stage, the actor who had been playing Romeo perceived one flower lying neglected—a crimson camellia of great beauty—and seemed about to return for it, but she held back his hand, and with a last low curtsy, disappeared. Clement rose to go with a dizzy throbbing head, and eyes dimmed with tears, that the pathetic close of the marvellous love-story had drawn from him. A stream of people poured out of the theatre pell-mell. The white-haired man (who had been blubbing unrestrainedly behind a yellow pocket-handkerchief) now asserted himself by much severe criticism and allusions to the "days of yore." The young clerks had returned to their one absorbing topic. The last words Clement heard them utter, were expressive of a conviction that "Jim" knew what he was about. That others might be wrong, or might be right, but that "Jim" was safe "to run on the right side of the post, to know when he was well off, and to recognise on which side of his bread the butter lay." Shakespeare's tragedy of Romeo and Juliet had apparently caused but slight and temporary interruption to the thread of this interesting discussion. As Clement reached the doorway and felt the cool pure air (cool and pure by contrast) upon his forehead, a stately equipage drew up beneath the portico. Into it, escorted by her great-nephew, skipped Lady Popham. On the pavement stood Alfred Trescott, bowing "good night." The overcoat that he wore was thrown back, and in the instant that he looked upon him, it flashed on Clement that he missed a flower from Trescott's breast, and that the neglected crimson blossom lying on the stage had been thrown by his hand.

It was long past eleven o'clock when Penelope Charlewood, sitting alone in the comfortless little parlour with her work in her hand, heard the key turn in the door, and went into the passage to receive her brother. They spoke in whispers, for Mrs. Charlewood had gone to rest, and every sound penetrated through the slight building.

"Penny, I'm so sorry you sat up, my dear."

"I had to sit up, Clem, to finish stitching

these collars. This is the last of the set. You're late. Very busy at the office?"

"No; not very. I went to Watty's. He was not at home, but I left a note to say he must come and see mother to-morrow."

"Oh," said Penelope, dryly. Then she looked wistfully at her brother. He had drawn back the blind, and was standing by the window looking on to the waste ground mysteriously transformed beneath the moonlight. "You are awfully fagged, Clem, and so pale! Or is it the moonlight on your face? No; you do look shockingly harassed. I'm sure you are worrying yourself about those anonymous letters. Shake it off, Clem. Why don't you good people have faith in the power of goodness?"

"No, Penny; no, indeed, my dear girl, it is not that. It is,—I—I do feel a little fagged. But I don't need or deserve so much sympathy. Good night, dear; you must be tired. I will go to bed at once."

"Ah!" said Penelope to herself, lying wakefully in her bed, "he can't deceive me. I know Clem so well. Every tone of his voice, every trick of his face; and I am *sure* he has been bothering himself about Watty and those letters!"

No. The locked silent chambers of her brother's brain kept their secret even from her keen scrutiny. Walter might never have been born, and the anonymous letters never written, for all the part they were playing in Clement's thoughts. What were the visions that flitted through the hot head he laid upon his pillow?

A shining satin dress; a pale, passionate face leaning down from a high quaint balcony; a white-robed figure huddled hopelessly upon the ground, with its dark hair streaming over the breast of a dead lover. And then a solitary crimson flower lying unheeded on the stage, and the sweeping flow of long trailing garments as their wearer bowed "farewell!"

CHAPTER IV. AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

MABEL EARNSHAW lived with her mother and Dooley in a pleasant house in one of the most sequestered of the Highgate lanes. Her great and assured success, surpassing even the expectations of those who most highly estimated her talent—for, as Mr. Alaric Allen said, "there's a certain element of chance in these things always, and if you miss fire at the first attempt, the public seldom has leisure to allow you a second trial-shot"—had enabled her to take this pretty residence, to surround her mother with many long disused luxuries, and to enjoy the happiness of seeing her little brother frolicking on a green lawn, instead of being mewed up in the small close rooms of their Dublin lodgings. Dooley was in high delight. He had parted from kind Aunt Mary and her family with regret, and had particularly missed Jack, with whom he had formed a close friendship, and whose versatile talents had impressed him deeply. But to be with mamma and Tibby was in itself a balm for any sorrows Dooley had yet known; and when, after a few weeks' sojourn at a London hotel, he was taken to the Highgate cottage embowered in trees,

and shut in from the noisy world by thick fragrant green hedges, his joy and excitement knew no bounds. Mabel's face grew bright as she watched the little fellow's eager interest in all around him, and the investigations throughout the house and grounds which his spirit of inquiry led him to make. There was a small white-curtained, fresh, cozy nest of a room, with ivy leaves tapping at its casement, that was reserved for "Master Julian." And there was a ruddy-faced country girl standing at the door of it to welcome him, who ran and caught him in her arms and hugged him, and laughed and cried altogether, and who proved to be the faithful Betty, secretly sent for from Hazlehurst to surprise him. And in the kitchen there was—yes, there was indeed—a kitten; smooth and beautiful of fur, and bright of eye, and with a collar round its neck, to which a little bell was fastened that jingled cheerfully. "She are a very nice pussy-kitten," said Dooley, stroking her with a thoughtful face. "A bootiful pussy-kitten; but I *tan't* love her quite so much as my own old pussy-kitten, tan I, Tibby? Because my own old pussy-kitten was so sorry when I did go away. And dis little pussy-kitten has never been sorry. And I must love de sorry one best, mustn't I, Tibby?"

Mrs. Saxelby nestled down into the pleasant home provided for her with child-like satisfaction. Her natural taste, and love of refinement and beauty in all her surroundings, were gratified to the utmost. And then her mother's heart exulted with the proud thought, "This is my Mabel's doing! All these good things represent her energy, industry, and genius, and the public recognition of those qualities." For all trace of horror and disapproval of the means by which Mabel was earning fame and fortune had vanished from Mrs. Saxelby's mind long ago. Not precisely on conviction—although an intimate knowledge of Mary Walton's life and home might have sufficed to modify on strictly logical grounds the sweeping condemnation that Mr. Saxelby and the Flukes were wont to utter against stage-players—but simply because Mrs. Saxelby had now been living for some time under the influence of people in whose eyes the actor's calling was an honourable one. In the first days of Mabel's experience as a London actress, Mrs. Saxelby had accompanied her daughter to the theatre each evening, and had sat in her dressing-room, or had occasionally ventured into the green-room for ten minutes at a time, never remaining there an instant after Mabel had quitted it for the stage. But for a day or two preceding Clement Charlewood's unpremeditated visit to the Thespian Theatre, Mrs. Saxelby had been suffering from a slight cold and sore-throat, which made it desirable for her to avoid exposure to the night air. Therefore Mabel had driven to the theatre for several evenings with no other escort than the faithful Betty, who came provided with a large worsted stocking to knit. Betty had never sufficiently got over her awe and admiration of the glittering stage garments to venture upon handling them. As to acting the part of

lady's-maid to her young mistress, that was entirely out of the question. But there was, luckily, no need of her services in that respect, for a dresser, belonging to the theatre, a woman experienced in her business, was in attendance each night in "Miss Bell's" room. On the evening succeeding that spoken of in my last chapter, Mabel and her somewhat uncouth-looking Abigail, the rustic ruddiness of whose cheeks defied even the glare of the gas-lights, arrived at the stage door of the Royal Thespian Theatre at their usual hour.

The interior of a theatre by daylight is always taken to be a strange anomalous scene; but I doubt whether the same scene, just before the hour of opening the doors to the public in the evening, be not in its way as singular to an unaccustomed eye, and equally far from revealing any promise of the bright pictures to be presently exhibited to the many-headed now waiting outside in the summer evening sunshine.

There is a bustle and a constant succession of arrivals at the stage door, it is true. That dingy portal swings to and fro ceaselessly; the well-worn cords running swiftly over the pulley as the great leaden weights fall and cause the door to slam to with a creaking jar. Servants, supers, carpenters, dressers, scene-shifters, crowd in with a careless nod or hasty "good evening" to the doorkeeper, who sits in his own small pen hung round with playbills, and takes note of each one as he or she enters. By-and-by the performers begin to arrive, and occasionally a letter or newspaper is reached down from the little pigeon-holes in the hall, each with a letter of the alphabet painted over it. The narrow wooden staircase leading up to the stage is feebly lighted by a single gas-burner. The various employes of the theatre troop up it one after the other, dispersing at the top each to his separate department—scene-room, dressing-room, property-room, or wardrobe. But on the great stage itself all is silence. The scene is not yet quite set, and the depth of the spacious stage is revealed even to the back wall of the building. There are great chasms and caverns of shadow, for the theatre is not entirely lighted up, nor the gas turned on to its full power. The front of the house is vast and ghostly, with a ray of light shining in here and there from the lobbies through the half-open box doors. The dingy holland covers that shield the gilding and velvet from dust, still drape the wide semicircle like a pall, and glimmer spectrally through the gloom. The orchestra is a black gulf, like a giant grave newly dug, and yawning just in front of the crimson stalls. Up above in the lofty roof the great chandelier looms vaguely with an undefined outline. It might be floating self-poised over the wide space beneath, for aught that can be discerned of its supports. By-and-by it will sparkle and flash like an enormous diamond, and the boxes will shine in scarlet and gold and white. The black orchestra will be full of light and sound, and careless fiddlers will laugh and chat, and glance nonchalantly about them as they tune their instruments. There will be

no shadow, no vagueness, no mystery. Only the great canvas act-drop will shut out the audience from the actors, and divide two realms differing as widely from each other as any kingdoms that were ever sundered by a political boundary line!

Mabel arriving at the theatre with her country servant on this especial evening of which I write, and going into her dressing-room, found it lighted up, and the toilet-table set forth, but the woman who usually attended on her was not there. She began to dress, however, with Betty's assistance (rendered very tremblingly, and with an overpowering sense of her own unfitness for the task), and it was not long before a tap at the door announced the arrival of the dresser. "Come in, Davis," said Mabel. But it was not Davis who entered. The person who came into the room bearing a large shallow open basket containing Juliet's satin train, was a tall woman in a bright print gown, the body and skirt of which had parted company in sundry places. She had an elaborate gilt comb in her tow-coloured hair, and was extremely smart, but not extremely clean.

"Is Davis not here to-night?" asked Mabel, seeing the unexpected figure in the looking-glass, without turning her head.

"No, miss; she is not, miss. Davis is bad with influenzy, and the housekeeper has sent me as her substitoot. I dresses the ladies in number three, miss, but there's nobody in my room to-night, so——"

Whilst the woman was speaking, Mabel turned to look at her, struck by something familiar in the sound of her voice.

"Surely I know you, do I not?" she said.

"Oh yes, miss. Most *unconvertibly* you know me, sure enough! Hammerham, miss."

"To be sure!" cried Mabel, into whose cheeks a tide of recollections caused a bright colour to mount and then to fade as quickly. "I remember you now quite well. You are Mrs. Hutchins. But how strange to find you here!" she added, wonderingly. For Miss Fluke had not failed to sing loud pæans over Mrs. Hutchins's conversion from novel reading, and such like iniquities, and to hold her up as a bright example of the admirable results of her own eloquence. Indeed, Mrs. Hutchins had been at one time a kind of recruiting sergeant under that spiritual Amazon; and had harried her neighbours and friends in the good cause with much zeal. During the progress of Mabel's toilet, Mrs. Hutchins proceeded to give a voluble account of the causes that had led to her leaving Hammerham. In the financial crash which had ruined great houses, little ones had suffered also. Mr. Hutchins was suddenly thrown out of work by the failure of his employer, and was glad to be taken on temporarily by the head carpenter of the Hammerham theatre. Thence—being a sober steady man who knew his business—he got to London; his friend, the theatrical head carpenter, having procured him a situation. "Hutchins was at a east-end house at first, miss," said Mrs. Hutchins, winding up her recital. "But we've

been at the Thespian now goin' on for three months. I had long been wishful of getting some occckypation for myself. And hearing of a dresser being wanted here, I applied, and the housekeeper she conferred the vacation upon me immediate."

It was odd to see how Mrs. Hutchins's old passion for the high-flown and romantic had survived the Flukian era, and was still strong and vigorous. Only her affections had been transferred from Rosalba of Naples and that interesting sisterhood to the heroines of the drama. Mrs. Hutchins generally had in her pocket a small paper-covered book—one of the gems of Cumberland's acting edition, or Mr. Lacy's more modern dramas. And these she devoured in the old manner that belonged to her; a manner that may, perhaps, be characterised as the slatternly-sentimental. Betty, knitting away at her stocking, regarded Mrs. Hutchins from time to time with a stare of stolid surprise. I have done but scant justice to that good lady's narrative. As given by herself it was embellished with many rhetorical flourishes and elegant flowers of quotation. After Mabel had left the room, Mrs. Hutchins still lingered; trifling with the toilet articles, arranging the dressing-case that needed no arrangement, and so forth. Betty watched her shy and glum behind her stocking.

"Been with Miss Bell long?" asked Mrs. Hutchins, with airy condescension.

"Ah; a goodish bit."

"Nice young person, ain't she?"

"What?"

"A—a—pleasant young—lady, I say; ain't she?"

"Yes, she is."

Betty's manner was unpromising; almost threatening. Mrs. Hutchins changed her tactics.

"You are not a Londoner, are you?"

"No; I ben't."

"Indeed! Well, no more ain't I. I come from Hammerham, myself. Ah, deary me! To look upon what I have seen, when I sees what I do see! Miss Bell and me was acquainted in old days."

"Was you?"

"Oh laws yes! And me and others was acquainted too. Only yesterday I seen a old friend of Miss Bell's. She didn't go by the name of Bell when I first knowed her. But you know what's in a name, don't you?"

"No; what?" demanded the literal Betty.

"Oh, nothing. *He's* a instance of the ups and downs of life. I've knowed the time when him or any of his family might have ate bank-notes bewixt bread-and-butter. And now a two-pair back is his sphere of action. Well, there's no making silk purses out of sow's ears. The Charlewoods was sprung up out of the kennel. There's a deal in blood, I think."

Betty's face had relaxed from its rigidity. There was a sparkle of curiosity in her eye. But with rustic cunning that was wary of Mrs. Hutchins's town-bred cuteness, she asked no point-blank question. "I heerd as they'd

come to London," she said, clicking her knitting-needles.

"Oh, you know the family, then?"

"By hearsay. I was born and bred nigh to Hammerham, and everybody knowed the Charlewoods there. Gandry and Charlewood they were called. I used to think, when I was little, as it was all one name."

Then Mrs. Hutchins leant her folded arms on the dressing-table, and poured forth a flood of gossip. She related all she had heard from the lodging-house servant, and coloured the tale with a warmth and boldness that ought to have made her fortune in halfpenny numbers. Poor Clement! Had there been any truth in the saying, how his ears must have tingled! Mrs. Hutchins did not spare him. Her rancour seemed strangely disproportioned to his offence. But mean minds are apt to expend more spite on slights than on injuries. There is some dignity in being injured; but a trifling offence, of which the offender is unconscious, envenoms petty malignity. Betty listened stolidly. She was surprised and puzzled, but at the base of her cogitations, was a rooted distrust of the glib Mrs. Hutchins; the kind of instinctive suspicion that a dog or a child might feel.

The meeting with the Hammerham landlady was not the only surprise destined for Mabel that evening.

Mr. Alaric Allen prided himself on the strictness with which he enforced the prohibition against admitting strangers behind the scenes of his theatre. But there were nevertheless a few exceptions made in favour of literary men, dramatic authors, critics, and so forth. Occasionally, too, at rare intervals, an idle good-humoured fine gentleman gained admission. Such persons would subject themselves to unheard of snubbings and humiliations, and to yet more intolerable patronage in order to gain the privilege of passing an hour behind the scenes of the Thespian Theatre. It is to be feared that the end when gained was scarcely satisfactory. An idle man in a crowd of workers is never at his ease. And it was a spectacle to awaken pity in the feeling breast, to behold a courteous, amiable person, a peer of the realm it might be, or "curled darling" of drawing-rooms, with a vacant uneasy smile on his face, pushed about by surly scowling scene-shifters, sternly hushed down by the prompter, driven hither and thither, getting into difficulties with "set pieces," tripping over black coils of gas-pipe, scraping his glossy evening coat against whitewashed walls, and finding everybody (from the call-boy upwards) too much occupied to spare any attention for his civil little speeches! Now and then there might come a lull between the acts, when the principal performers sat and chatted in the green-room. Then the visitor, perhaps, would have a chance of exchanging half a dozen words with Lady Teazle or Rosalind; or of complimenting Coriolanus on his "admirable performance." The great tragedian meanwhile answering very civilly, and very much at random, with his eyes

fixed on the large psyche mirror, rearranging the classic folds of his toga, and mentally debating whether his wig had the right Roman severity of outline. Perhaps the true gust and enjoyment of the thing came afterwards, when the fortunate visitor would carelessly allude to "the other evening when I was behind the scenes at the Thespian, you know. Ever been behind the scenes? Not easy to get in *there*, but it's awfully good fun."

Mabel, entering the green-room, with the unexpected encounter with Mrs. Hutchins fresh in her mind, was accosted by a gentleman whom she already knew slightly; a well-known musical critic. Behind him stood a young man in full evening costume, who made Mabel a profound bow. There was another man in the room who stood leaning on the mantelpiece, with his face turned away.

"Allow me to present my friend, Captain Skidley," said the musical critic—a fussy, pompous personage—introducing the young man who had bowed. Then, turning and touching the other man on the shoulder, he went on: "I think you two have met before. Miss Bell, Mr. Alfred Trescott."

SOLDIERS' WEDDINGS.

I AM the curate of a large parish. Round my pretty church the country sweeps away until it is bounded by a range of many-coloured hills. The church itself is embosomed in a grove of beech-trees. On either side of the porch are ranged some fragments of a more ancient building: an Anglo-Saxon font of huge dimensions, a portion of a broken cross, the remains of a sculptured tomb retaining only an earnest adjuration that passing strangers should pray for the dead who once lay beneath. Under weeping larches is a cluster of costly monuments "erected by brother-officers to their departed comrades." How young they have all died! Some, survived the toils and dangers of the Indian mutiny to fade away at home. Others, were cut off suddenly in the pride of youth and strength. There is a camp within the boundaries of our parish, and they escort their dead officers with military pomp and circumstance to this quiet graveyard. Too often have we seen the long procession moving slowly down the hills—the gun-carriage and its burden; the charger which seems conscious of its master's death; the firing-party who, when all the rest is over, startle the air to the sound of the *réveillé*, so like the wail of a spirit struggling to depart. What a world of idle hopes lies buried here! Regiment after regiment come and disappear. They leave the dead and their memorials behind them to our care. Sometimes, after the lapse of many years, a soldier comes to view the resting-place of "the officer of his company." He has seen much service since he followed his commander to the grave. He tells me the story of his life, and much about the captain who sleeps below. I observe he is pleased

that the moss which will grow round the base of tombs is trimmed and neatly kept in order, and that the rose or box tree, which he and his colour-sergeant planted at the foot, have grown so well. Seated among these tombs, you would imagine you were far away from any haunt of men, all is so still and silent. Yet the roar of the cannon and the rattling volleys of musketry awake you from your reverie, and tell you that behind the hills an army is manœuvring in mimic warfare.

But it is not of soldiers' graves, but of soldiers' marriages that I wish to speak. We celebrate many such marriages in our village church. It is strange how private soldiers contrive to gain pretty winsome girls. The brides are not from our neighbourhood or county. They have followed their lovers from Manchester, Leeds, Bristol, and other towns where the regiment has been quartered. They lodge for a fortnight or three weeks within the boundaries of the parish, and then "put up the banns." Marriage by banns is comparatively inexpensive—it costs ten shillings at the utmost. Yet sometimes "the parties" find it hard to make up this sum. The girl will gladly take service for a month or two, and save every penny of her wages for the fee, "to get her soldier," as a blushing creature, not seventeen years of age, told the rector's wife last week. Not seldom an angry father or anxious brother comes to "forbid the banns." I am powerless to accept their prohibition unless the girl is under age. I must "put up the banns," and celebrate the marriage, under heavy penalties, if the parties are of full years, and no legal impediment be proved. Should the girl be under age, she can yet baffle father, mother, and all her kith and kin, by a very simple method. She has but to appear before the registrar with a friend, and state her age, residence, &c. The registrar transmits the list of candidates for matrimony to the Poor Law Guardians. These are landed gentlemen who seldom know anything of the parties, and who cannot be expected to attend carefully, while their clerk reads out a list of from fifty to a hundred names, all of the lower order. Then after an interval of a week the registrar performs the prayerless ceremony in five minutes, and if there should be perjury in the case, who is to prosecute, or what is the utility of a prosecution? The girl has left her home, and her parents try to make the best of it.

Sometimes the bride and bridegroom are anything but interesting. I once married a coarse woman, who wore a man's trousers under her apology for a gown, and a tremendous pair of "ammunition boots." Soldiers, especially old soldiers, sometimes choose a wife, not for show, but use. A good stout washerwoman, who is well able to do a turn of hard work and hold her own, a widow with a few pounds or the furniture of a room, such charmers seem to possess strong claims upon the veteran's heart.

Occasionally we have a scene of romance. Not long ago, a showy damsel, adorned with chains and trinkets, and rustling in silks and crinoline, offered my wife fifty pounds if she

would get her married before morning: That, of course, was impossible, unless the officiating clergyman desired to be transported. I traced out a portion of this young lady's history, and found that the intended bridegroom was suffering under temporary insanity. Within a few hours he was under the guardianship of his friends. When a regiment is ordered out to India, we have a rush of marriages; on one Sunday, last year, the list of banns occupied several minutes in reading. In India, the wives permitted to go with the regiment are valuable auxiliaries to the husband. They are cared for by the officer's ladies; they are well paid as laundresses, cooks, or attendants. They earn more money than the soldiers, and, if thrifty and well conducted, may be really comfortable. For three weeks or a fortnight before the departure of the regiment, the parish clerk is busy preparing notices for banns or licenses. The cost of a common soldier's license is now reduced to five shillings and sixpence; but this fee goes to the registrar of the diocese, not to the clergyman. The church fees are an additional charge. The marriage by banns is consequently cheaper by five shillings and sixpence to the common soldier, and by sixteen shillings and sixpence to the corporal and higher officers. There is a search made for a Saint's day in the calendar as the time of departure approaches. If there be a church festival in the week, the parties can be "called" and married within nine days. Experience proves that the marriage law should be relaxed in the case of soldiers ordered on foreign service, who have obtained "leave" to marry. It is a question whether a commanding officer can legally marry on shipboard when there is no chaplain in the vessel. Colonels and majors, however, have thus performed the wedding ceremony on emergency. If commanding officers have this privilege, why should not clergymen also possess it, and be allowed to marry in such cases on three days' notice? Some very distressing and painful incidents prove that a modification of the marriage law is desirable in this respect. No Protestant clergyman can celebrate a marriage after twelve o'clock in the day; the Roman Catholic priest can marry when and where he pleases. It has frequently happened that on the very day appointed for the wedding, a review, or grand parade, or extraordinary guard is ordered. When this is the case, the soldier cannot reach the church in time. The whole party is disappointed, and the marriage deferred. I have waited at the church on five several days for a bridegroom who was detained "on duty," and the misery of the intended bride was inconceivable. What magic is there in the hour of twelve o'clock? Should not a marriage celebrated at the hour of one, two, or three, in the afternoon be as legitimate as one celebrated before twelve? I fear my clerk's watch is sometimes not quite up to time—no one thinks of looking at the dial in the church tower—and I fancy that many a marriage would have been celebrated *not* within canonical hours, if our parish watches were always regulated by the time-ball at Greenwich.

A sergeant's, especially a colour-sergeant's, wedding, is often a grand affair. I married a beautiful young girl, recently, to a fine stalwart fellow, who had seen much service, and who has a claim upon the Kirwee prize money, should it be fully distributed during his life. The bride was dressed for the occasion by the officers' ladies of her father's regiment. He was a bronzed old soldier, and had his left breast covered with medals. The bride was attended to the altar by six bridesmaids, attired alike. This wedding was remarkable in a parish celebrated for its marriages. There are not many like it. Often only the pair who are to walk together through life, appear before the chancel rails, and the sexton and clerk must be the attesting witnesses. I have frequently regretted my inability to dissuade girls from marrying soldiers "without leave," but they will persist in entertaining a confident hope that they will be taken "on the strength" very soon. The wives, in these cases, are not recognised by the officers' ladies or by the regiment. They must rent a room or share a lodging with four or five others, who may be reputable characters or the reverse. The husband can visit his wife only by "starts," and she is wholly unprotected at night. What can a private save, even from his increased pay, to enable him to support a wife without some assistance from the state? As long as her little savings last, her position is tolerable; when those are exhausted, she tries—steadily and laboriously tries—to earn something by needlework, by weeding or binding in the fields, or by selling fruit and vegetables. But it is a hard life at best, and exposed to wrong and sore temptation. How often has my interference been entreated by some young weeping wife whose husband has committed a trifling breach of military discipline, and is removed far from her for many days! But when the regiment to which her husband belongs, has got the route, then comes the real misery. She is not on the strength. She must be left behind, perhaps with a baby at her breast, and another at her knees. It is almost as bad as death, a separation now; but she will be with him to the last upon his way. You may see them, women of all ages, tramping by the flanks of the marching regiment. One hand of the soldier is in his wife's, the other holds his musket; the sergeant, kindly, never minds, and martinetts are for once short-sighted. The band plays cheerily "The girl we left behind us," until the ship receives its living freight, and the women wretchedly pace the pier—a mournful company. Still there is a struggle: they work, and work incessantly. They live on next to nothing. They scrape and save, in a manner all but incredible. Many of them in some way—I never can ascertain how—find means to join their husbands abroad. I have known them to make their way to Gibraltar, Malta, India, apparently without means. A few of those who are left, return to their parents or their friends. They may be received, for their manual services are valuable; at the worst, there is the poor-house. But some hover about the pre-

cinets of the camp, and gradually sink step by step.

Nor, until the circular of Lord Longford was issued last week, could the condition even of the women "married with leave" be deemed desirable. They were "on the strength" to be sure. The ladies of the regiment looked after them: there were schools for their children, medical assistance, and opportunities for adding to the husbands' scanty means, by such labour as willing hands and anxious hearts can execute. Yet how were they housed? From four to six men with their wives and children stowed away in a narrow hut, without means for privacy or even for decency. A little curtain, when it could be obtained, nominally screened off bed from bed. Efforts were made to alleviate the shames and discomforts of the married soldiers' life, but in vain. The want of a separate room for each family frustrated the most zealous Christian interference.

But the Horse Guards' circular makes marriage a prize for service and good conduct. Seven men out of every hundred, rank and file, can now obtain permission to marry, provided they have each served in the army for seven years, and obtained, at least, one good-conduct badge. Seven in every hundred is about the proportion of those who at present marry, with and without leave, together. The wife will have, if possible, a separate room in camp or barracks; she will receive light, fuel, and rations at the cost of the state; but what may be more important than all, she will be under the eye of the ladies of the garrison. By this arrangement wives will be a help rather than an encumbrance to their husbands. Marriage becomes a reward, not a military crime, and marriage "without leave," and all its attendant miseries, will be to a great extent prevented. More than one-half of the sergeants in a regiment may at once marry with leave, and become entitled to these privileges.

Many improvements have been effected in the soldier's condition within the last few years, but none likely to be attended with more beneficial effects upon the morals of the troops than this. The addition of twopence and threepence per day to the soldier's wage virtually doubles all he had before to spend or save. His barracks are constructed now, on approved sanitary principles; his clothing, food, and opportunities for education are excellent. He has his recreation-rooms, reading-rooms, and regimental gardens. The troop-ships, constructed specially to convey him to our colonies and dependencies, are magnificent models of naval architecture; and henceforth, in the hour of trial, his arm will not be unnerved by the bitter thought that his wife and children are waifs and strays tossed about upon the cold waters of the world's charity.

A trained soldier is an expensive article. He costs the state, before he is fitted to face an enemy, from one hundred to one hundred and forty pounds. It is economy to consider his health and comfort. Soldiers cannot be manufactured in a day, and our small army must make up in vigour and spirit for its deficiency in numbers. Statesmen have at last discovered that a soldier is a man, and not a machine. He

is permitted at last, "if well conducted," to assist the husbands in gathering in the harvest, and to breathe the pure country air, while adding to his little store by manly and pleasant labour. He will not be the less valiant in the field because he is treated as a human being.

THREE GOOD DOGS.

EVERY dog has his day; some dogs have two days: one, the short span of canine life, the other, the more enduring existence of fame. M. Emile Richebourg has just collected a number of the latter into an amusing volume, entitled *Histoire des Chiens Célèbres*. Some publisher, doubtless, will soon give this, entire, to the public in an English dress; meanwhile, we introduce our readers to three only of his celebrated dogs.

Bandjarra is the name of a race of people who, although few in number, are met with all over India. Dealing in corn, they travel much from place to place. Their resources are very limited, and their temporary dwellings of the simplest construction. On a plot of ground a few feet square, in the midst of a forest, and generally on an eminence, the Bandjarra settler fixes his residence during a portion of the year. Sacks full of wheat, covered with skins, constitute the walls of his mansion; other skins, suspended from branches, form a roof which imperfectly keeps out wind and rain. Beneath this tent are herded the oxen, which are the Bandjarra's principal wealth. His dog keeps ceaseless watch outside. The Bandjarra dog is not remarkable for any external grace or beauty; but it would be difficult to find a creature gifted with greater courage, keener instinct, or firmer attachment to his master.

A Bandjarra of the name of Dabi happened to require the loan of a thousand rupees with which to undertake a speculative journey. All the persons to whom he applied, having little faith in his promise, met the request with a refusal. He had a dog called Bheirou, whom he loved better than he could tell. After long hesitation, he resolved to offer this dog as a pledge. His first attempts were unavailing, but he found at last a rich merchant named Dhyaram who accepted the conditions. Dabi promised to return within a year. He bade adieu to Bheirou, commanding him by words and signs to remain faithful during that period to his temporary master. The dog did his duty in every respect; but more than a twelve-month elapsed, and yet no news came of Dabi. The merchant began to believe that he was cheated, and to repent of his over-credulity. At that time the Bandjarra country was much infested by thieves. One dark night the household was suddenly aroused by Bheirou's violent and angry barking. Dhyaram got up. A band of robbers were trying to force their way into his dwelling. Before he had time to set about repulsing them, Bheirou had attacked a couple of the gang. He threw them down and tore them. A third advanced to strike Dhyaram; the dog

seized him by the throat, and the master killed him. This beginning did not encourage the rest: they took to flight. Dyharam, whose life had been saved by the bravery even more than by the vigilance of Bheirou, manifested his gratitude by all sorts of caresses; and considering the debt to be paid with interest, he tried to make the good creature understand that he was no longer a hostage, but free to rejoin his master. Bheirou—and this is the wonderful part of the story—shook his head mournfully, to indicate that a mere verbal order like this, given to him alone, would not excuse him in Dabi's eyes. But at last Dyharam succeeded in persuading him; and after taking an affectionate leave, he made him set off in the direction by which Dabi ought to return.

Now Dabi, whose affairs had detained him beyond the appointed term, was collecting the money to discharge the debt, at a few leagues' distance from his creditor's house. All at once, perceiving Bheirou running to meet him, unattended, he turned pale, believing that the dog had stolen away from Dyharam's custody, thereby compromising his word of honour. In a fit of rage, heedless of the dog's caresses, he drew his sabre and killed him on the spot.

A few minutes afterwards, to his bitter grief, he found tied to Bheirou's neck a quittance for the thousand rupees signed by the merchant, together with a letter relating the dog's exploits. Inconsolable for his fatal error, Dabi devoted the money to the erection of a monument on the spot where the bloody deed occurred. The people of the neighbourhood still point out this monument to travellers, which is known by the name of Koukarry-Gaou. They also believe that earth taken from Bheirou's grave is a sovereign remedy for the bite of mad dogs.

Our second dog had his troubles too, but of a less tragic kind. He was a spaniel, and his name was Cabriole. His master, the Comte de Brevonne's chef, or man-cook, had brought him up from a puppy, paying particular attention to his fetching and carrying. Cabriole would catch a half-franc piece in the air, and take it to the person named to him, often residing at a considerable distance. When an errand had to be done, he took the basket in his mouth, and went for tobacco, coffee, sugar, cheese, or any other article of daily use which happened to be required in an emergency. Why send a dog, and not a servant? For this good reason. The comte's château is five miles distant from Langres, the nearest market-town. A servant would take three hours to go there and back and make his purchases; the dog, when encouraged to exert himself, did it in three-quarters of an hour. The dog knew all the tradesmen; a card in the basket mentioned what was wanted; and one tradesman sent him on to the next.

One Friday, more unlucky than the rest of Fridays, four persons called at the château. They were asked to stop and dine; the invitation was accepted, and the cook was ordered to prepare a suitable meagre dinner. It was four in the after-

noon, and the unfortunate chef had nothing, absolutely nothing, except kidney beans and lentils. How could he compose a "suitable" dinner with that? His hair almost lifted his cap from his head. "If I had only a little fish!" he groaned, banging his saucepans about in despair. "But I haven't so much as a red-herring. Here, Cabriole; you must help me out of this mess." Cabriole took the basket and his orders, and darted away from the château like an arrow. In twenty minutes he reached the town. The fishwoman to whom he proudly presented himself, glanced at the card, and took six handsome eels out of a tub of water. That the cook might have no doubt of their freshness, she refrained from killing them, merely tying them in a napkin, and putting them into the basket strong and alive. Cabriole thanked her with a thoughtless wag of his tail, and immediately set off on his way back home.

Poor innocent dog! He thought that his charge would be as easy to carry as a pound of coffee. For a while, the eels lay quiet enough; but having their doubts, perhaps, respecting the object of their journey, their heads were soon peeping out of the basket. Cabriole perceived it. Surprised, but not intimidated, he growled and snarled and shook the basket, to make them keep still. The move succeeded; but before long the eels again felt a wish to look about them. This time he set the basket down, and drove them back into it with strokes of his paw. Once more they lay quiet for a minute or two, allowing him to proceed on his journey homewards. But eels are as restless as they are slippery. Not content with looking out, they crawled out, and were making their escape. Cabriole, in a rage, set the basket down, picked them up one by one, and returned them to the basket. As fast as he did so, out they crept again; until, losing patience, he killed them, each and several, by a sharp bite applied to the nape of the neck. He then put them into the basket, and set off for the château at railway speed.

But all this required time. The cook, getting fidgety, had sent forward one of his assistants to see what was the cause of the delay; and to this witness we are indebted for the correct knowledge of what occurred. Cabriole was duly praised and petted; but from that day forth he loathed the sight of fish. If the word "eel" were pronounced in his presence, he ran away and hid himself for two or three days.

Our third canine friend was a military dog. During the First French Empire, every regiment had its dog, whose intelligence, thanks to the soldiers' care, was improved by education and discipline. The Grand Army's dogs were picked up almost everywhere, except in England. They had been recruited in Poland, in Prussia, in Holland, in Saxony, and in Flanders. They were mongrel mastiffs, hounds, Danish dogs, spaniels. But no matter where they came, they soon turned French. Foreign dogs were naturalised without knowing it.

Rugen is an island in the Baltic Sea, opposite to Stralsund, on the coast of Pomerania.

Fortified both by nature and by art, its situation is exceedingly strong. In time of peace, in consequence of its fertile soil, its salubrious air, and its mild climate, Rugen is a delightful retreat. In time of war, it is an important post, a natural citadel, a formidable fortress, whose possession has been purchased at the expense of many a bloody fight. During the campaign of 1807, this island was comprised in their sphere of operations by the corps commanded by Marshal Davoust, and was occupied by an infantry regiment of the line, and by several companies of sappers and miners. The regiment, of course, had a dog—a black and white poodle—named Capucin—not because he was born in a Capuchins' convent in Italy (which would have been a quite sufficient reason), but in allusion to the copper or iron rings by which a gun-barrel is fastened to its stock. The dog's short bark might perhaps have been thought to resemble the snappish report of a musket.

In consequence of a change in the plan of operations ordered by Napoleon the First, the island had to be suddenly evacuated, to carry out a movement in retreat abandoning the whole line of the Pomeranian coast. Every post, every man, was withdrawn; but in such a hasty way that they forgot an advanced sentinel perched on the top of a hillock which commanded the entrance of the port of Rugen. This sentinel was a young soldier named Firmin Bonard, who had scarcely been three years in the service. At present, a soldier who has served three years is considered quite a veteran; at that time, troopers who could reckon three, five, seven, and even nine, years of service, were still called conscripts. Now, Bonard the soldier and Capucin the dog happened to be particularly good friends, bound by the strongest ties of mutual attachment.

The corporal of the post had planted Firmin as sentinel on the hillock exactly at midnight. The latter therefore calculated on being relieved at two in the morning, and also that from two till five he would have three good hours to doze and slumber in the corps-de-garde. So Firmin Bonard beguiled the time by anticipating this supreme indulgence, also by thoughts of his village steeple, of his aged curé's ancient housekeeper, of the haystack where he used to play at hide-and-seek, and sundry other recollections. In this way the minutes slipped slowly by, and the two hours' guard were drawing to a close.

All at once he heard a slight noise. He listened. "It is the corporal coming to relieve guard?" he thought, and prepared to utter the formal "Qui vive?" But the sound, which resembled that of human footsteps, was soon followed by complete silence. "I couldn't be mistaken!" he said to himself. "Besides, my time must now be up." He listened again, still more attentively. Almost immediately, he heard the barking of a dog, who came running forward in his direction. On recognising Capucin's voice, the sentinel looked round him anxiously. Perceiving nothing which

threatened an attack, he wondered what could be the meaning of this nocturnal visit. Before he had time to consider the matter, the animal had climbed the hill and was jumping up his legs. "It's you, Capucin. Very good. You got tired of waiting there; and I am tired of standing here. The air is keen, and I am terribly sleepy. You should have brought the corporal with you. His watch must have stopped. He ought to sell it for old iron and buy a new one."

Capucin's answer was a frenzied bark and a series of mad leaps around his friend.

"I understand," said Firmin, smiling. "You are asking me to dance to warm myself. It's a pity you are not provided with the password and a musket."

Capucin continued to bark, running right and left like a creature possessed. Finding all these manœuvres useless, he ran up to the soldier, pulled him by the coat, and tried hard to pull him away, renewing his efforts with such violence that he tore the soldier's uniform. Firmin, considering this proof of affection more troublesome than pleasant, lost his temper, and gave poor Capucin a kick. The dog, howling at finding himself so cruelly maltreated and misunderstood, retreated to a few paces' distance; but soon returned, heedless of his friend's unkind treatment. All he did now, was to look forgiveness and lick the soldier's hands.

"Be quiet, will you? And take yourself off," said Firmin, harshly, as he threatened him with the butt of his gun, to drive him away. Capucin, finding he could do no good, unwillingly made up his mind to depart. He arrived just in time to go on board with the last detachment of the corps.

At four o'clock he began to lose patience. Discipline forbade his quitting the post; but hunger, which drives the wolf out of the wood, compelled him to forget the Code Militaire. He left his station, and went to the guard-house, muttering to himself: "If anybody deserves to be shot for this, it is not I, but the corporal, who doesn't know his business, and keeps a sentinel on guard six hours at a time."

In the guard-house, not a creature! The only supposition he could form was, that the regiment had gone to occupy another part of the island. He shouldered his gun and stalked off across country in search of the regiment. On the way, he fell in with a farmer ploughing a field. "Can you tell me," he asked him, "in which direction the French have marched?"

"They are gone away," was the startling reply. "They embarked at two this morning, stepping lightly and without uttering a word, in consequence of an order received from the emperor."

"Gone away, leaving me behind! I shall be reported as a deserter! Confound that corporal; he has been my ruin. I now understand what poor Capucin meant. It is not the death I fear, so much as the disgrace."

"Don't take on in that way," said the farmer, in a consolatory tone of voice. "Shrieking never set a broken bone. Stay here, and make the best of a bad business. If the French

"come back again, I can prove that it was no fault of yours."

"My good man, you don't know the severity of our rules."

"They will not punish you for a crime you have not committed. Meanwhile, you cannot live on air. You probably were brought up in the country, and are accustomed to do country work?"

"Certainly. I can plough, for instance."

"The very thing for me. I can offer you good board and lodging, with a small weekly payment into the bargain. It will be the best thing you can do, under the circumstances." The soldier heaved a heavy sigh, and slowly gazed all round the horizon, to see whether any of the ships were still visible. Beholding nothing, he said, at last: "I thankfully accept your offer."

"Good!" said the farmer, Peter Baxen. "Come and breakfast at once. We will go on with the ploughing afterwards."

At Baxen's farm the soldier-ploughman had plenty of opportunities of proving his capacity. He found such favour in the farmer's eyes—and in other people's too—that Baxen determined to try and keep him for good and all.

"My worthy fellow," he said one day, "I look upon you almost as a son."

"If my poor old father," Firmin answered, "were not anxiously awaiting my return to France, I would willingly remain in Rugen."

"You can bring him back with you, the next time you go to France. But what I want to say to you now, concerns my daughter."

Firmin coloured up to the eyes.

"Unless I am much mistaken, you and she are very good friends."

Firmin uttered a few unintelligible words.

"The neighbours even say you are in love with her."

"I assure you I never uttered a word which could lead her to suppose that——"

"I know it; and for that very reason I took upon myself to tell her that, if you had no objection, she might have you for her husband."

"And she said——?"

"Not a word; but she threw her arms round my neck and kissed me for a quarter of an hour." A fortnight afterwards, Firmin Bonard was married to the fair-haired Clarissa, Peter Baxen's only daughter.

Four years then elapsed, pretty equally divided between love and labour. His thoughts occasionally reverted to France, but he had almost forgotten his compulsory desertion. The past soon fades from our memory when the present is satisfactory and the future promising.

One morning, the look-out man in the town of Rugen signalled a fleet of ships in the offing. They were men-of-war, carrying the French flag. "The French are coming!" people shouted to each other. "They are going to land!"

Firmin Bonard heard it. "The French are coming!" rang in his ears like the boom of an alarm-gun. It told him that he was a lost man. Nevertheless, a thought struck him which relieved his heart by a glimmer of hope.

He ran home, put on his uniform, seized his

arms, and mounted guard on the very spot where, five years before, he had been unintentionally abandoned. Meanwhile, boats full of soldiers rowed towards the hillock. In the fore-part of one of the boats was a black and white poodle. As it approached the beach, the creature barked with joy. In spite of his anxiety, Firmin's eyes filled with tears as he recognised his old friend Capucin. The dog, unable to master his impatience, jumped into the sea and swam to shore.

As soon as the boats had come within ear-shot, Firmin "made ready," and shouted at the top of his voice, "Qui vive?"

"Qui vive, yourself?" said the occupants of the first boat, which was filled with officers, composing Marshal Davoust's staff. "Who are you? And what are you doing here?"

"I am a sentinel, keeping guard."

"A pretty sentinel! How long have you been on guard?"

"Five years."

"It is time to come down, then," shouted the officers, laughing.

When Firmin descended from his hill, Capucin ran to meet him half way, barking with joy, and jumping into his arms.

"Poor Capucin! Have it all your own way this time. Do whatever you like. Dirty me, tear my clothes; I shan't send you away. I ought to have made a better return for your attempt to serve me."

Followed by the faithful dog, Firmin joined his former comrades. He gave a plain account of what had happened. By a lucky chance, the corporal, who had forgotten him, and who had since been promoted, belonged to Marshal Davoust's staff. He received his old comrade with open arms. Firmin, in return, invited his countrymen to the farm, where he entertained them with liberal hospitality. The adventure reached Marshal Davoust's ears. He laughed at Firmin's stratagem, and presented him with a discharge drawn up in due form. "I should not like the brave fellow," he said, "to appear before a court-martial, after having kept guard so long."

Firmin continued a farmer. He had a large family, who at present fill the highest and most important offices in the island. They are commonly known as the Sentinel's Family. When the French finally left Rugen, Capucin remained. Like his master, he forgot his military tastes, and devoted himself exclusively to farming.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

PRISON DISCIPLINE.

In 1729, the disgraceful state of the London prisons had reached so horrible a pitch that it became necessary to bring up two of the deputy governors for trial on charges of murder, these trials having been preceded by a parliamentary commission.

Acton, the head warder of the Marshalsea, and one of his subordinates, named Rogers, were especially exasperated with one Bliss, a refractory carpenter, because he, with six or

seven others, had some time before set a bad example, by attempting to break out through an oven. For this offence Bliss had been thrust for three weeks into the Strong Room, a damp, unwholesome, uncovered place, where a man named Mullinshead was lying in the heaviest fetters.

The dismal Strong Room was the Black Hole of the Marshalsea, dreaded by even the most dauntless highwaymen, and bearable only to toads and rats. Bliss and his abettors were thrown on the ground in this prison-cellar in company with a poor wretch who had an iron collar round his neck.

After a time, Bliss made a second attempt to escape, was caught, dragged by the legs over the stones, and horribly beaten with ox sinews. Then the dreadful iron cap was forced on his head—a cap originally made in King William's time for steadying felons while they were being burnt in the cheek. It had been left behind at the Marshalsea as a mere relic when the other irons had been removed to the county jail. Bliss was otherwise tortured until he confessed who brought him the rope he had used for his second escape. When he was released from the Strong Room, the prisoner's legs swelled, the irons ate into them and became buried in the flesh. There were holes near his ankle, and Acton's men were at last compelled to remove the fetters,—which had bitten into the legs as clogs do into a horse's fetlocks. Bliss was kept without any covering but a blanket.

Bliss, being released after several months, went to Southgate to work as a carpenter, but fell ill, complained of inward bruises, and soon after died. Acton was tried for the murder of Bliss at the Kingston assizes on July 6, 1729, but was acquitted.

Other indictments against the prisoner, although they also terminated in acquittal, served to show in a striking way the utter want of any proper management in prisons at this period, and the habitual cruelty and tyranny of the turnkeys and deputies of the too often absentee governors. In all these cases Acton escaped, not because he was not guilty, but because it was difficult to decide how far the cruelty had been Acton's, and how far it had arisen from the exaggeration of his orders by the turnkeys. Bliss's case is quoted as a sample of the rest.

It seems almost incredible that, at this very time, the government should have permitted the Marshalsea to be farmed out. The patent rights were purchased from the Earl of Radnor for five thousand pounds, and there were sixteen shareholders in the concern, all interested in squeezing out fees, starving prisoners, and concealing all acts of cruelty. In the King's Bench, in cases of riot, soldiers were often called in to beat and puncture the turbulent inmates. In Newgate, if a highwayman or murderer had only his pocket full of guineas, he could toss off his brandy, and revel, and brawl till the hour came to press him to death, or to cart him off to the green fields of Tyburn.

But upon Thomas Bambridge, warden of the Fleet, public hatred fell very heavily. A wretch named Huggins had bought the patent of the wardenship of a nobleman, and he sold it to Bambridge. By letters patent, Bambridge was appointed keeper of his Majesty's Old and New Palaces of Westminster, as also warden of his Majesty's prison of the Fleet for life. In 1728, Bambridge was taken into custody, and soon after confined under irons in Newgate; and whilst he was under this confinement, an act of parliament was made, reciting "that his Majesty had been pleased to order his Attorney-General to prosecute at law the said Thomas Bambridge for wilfully permitting several debtors, as well to his Majesty as to divers of his subjects, to escape, and for being guilty of the most notorious breaches of his trust, and the highest crimes and misdemeanours in the execution of his said office; and having, arbitrarily and unlawfully, loaded with irons and put into dungeons and destroyed prisoners put under his charge." Bambridge was deprived of his letters patent.

This Bambridge, who appears to have been a low cheating attorney, was acquitted on his first trial, without even producing witnesses. He continued, however, in close confinement (what a state of law!) for nine months; then admitted to bail; but kept in custody nevertheless till the June following.

The inquiry of the parliamentary committee disclosed the most iniquitous enormities. The prison, in fact, had been merely a shop, and the prisoners had been squeezed for money like apples in a cider-press. Rich malefactors had been allowed their temporary liberty and the power of renewing their crimes. Smugglers were permitted to run their cargoes, and then to quietly return to their wards. A man who owed the government ten thousand pounds was allowed to escape. A certain Dumoy had been several times to France—perhaps for Jacobite purposes—while nominally a prisoner. These sort of pseudo-prisoners were known to the turnkeys under the playful name of "pigeons," and they had bill transactions with the warden. To the poorer and more unprofitable prisoners Bambridge was very cruel; beating them, loading them with irons that made life a misery, and immuring them in more than usually loathsome dungeons. A poor, broken-down baronet, named Sir William Rich, who refused to pay a baronet's entrance-fee of five pounds, was loaded with the largest fetters and thrown into one of the most miserable caves of the prison, Bambridge occasionally threatening him with a red-hot poker, or the loaded guns and ponderous rusty halberds of his body-guard; but there was no burning or beating the money out of the noble baronet, and that was the exasperating part of the business. The cruel lawyer also, on one occasion, threatened to make his men fire on a certain Captain Mackpheadris (we picture the captain, a gaunt, obdurate man in threadbare uniform laced with copper). The captain becoming

incapable of paying rent, was thrust out of his room, to live and starve in a dreary open yard of the prison, called the *Barre*. The captain being, however, a man of resources, and perhaps accustomed to Flemish campaigns, began, with the true spider-patience, to build a hut in a corner of the yard. It was only a shaky, tent-like structure, fashioned of earth, tiles, and broken bricks, not a house to be envious of. Bambridge, vexed at his debtor's subterfuge for a room, had it pulled down. For other offenders he had "Julius Cæsar's Chapel" and the "Upper and Lower Ease," while in the "Lyons' Den" desperate prisoners were strapped to the ground.

Close to the prison there was a sponging-house, kept by Corbett, a man entirely at Bambridge's disposal, who charged every prisoner an entrance-fee of five pounds sixteen shillings and fourpence, the "philazer," the judge's clerk, the tipstaves, and the warden all pouncing on the tormented wretch for their dues. Then there were fees to obtain better rooms and lighter irons, and a six-shilling bowl of punch to be given as a sort of house-warming. Corbett was, in fact, a licensed robber, and there was no law to prevent his theft or his persecutions.

Between the jailer of the Fleet and this Corbett there was sometimes sharp practice in the arrests. On one occasion, a total stranger, an innocent and uninvolved man, while stopping at the grate to talk comfort to the prisoners, and give them charity, was dragged in by Corbett and Co., and not released till he had paid fees and sworn not to institute proceedings. When charitable ladies sent money to discharge the claims against poor men who remained in the Fleet for fees only, Bambridge often concealed many such prisoners, unwilling to let them enjoy freedom again. He was proved, also, to have taken bribes, especially forty guineas and an amber and silver model of a Chinese junk, worth eighty broad pieces, from a poor woman. This wretch, in fact, revelled like a second Jonathan Wild in every black meanness and peculation. For instance, when an Insolvent Act was passed with some little mercy in it, this atrocious rascal required three guineas from each prisoner before he would allow them to enjoy the benefit of the new act.

He had another ingenious trick. Immediately he had beaten a prisoner, or in any way exceeded the law, he preferred a bill of indictment against the sufferer for riot or attempt to escape, to stop his mouth, and prejudice the judges against him.

The committee that examined Bambridge consisted of five noblemen and many eminent commoners. Among them were: General Wade, the great road-maker of the Highlands; Sir James Thornhill, soon after Hogarth's father-in-law; Francis Child, the banker; and Sir Gregory Page, the hanging judge satirised by Pope. The chairman was James Oglethorpe, Esq. The scene is the more interesting to us, because it was excellently painted by Ho-

garth for one of the members, Sir Archibald Grant of Monymusk, knight of the shire for Aberdeen.

"On the table," says Horace Walpole, describing this picture, "are the instruments of torture. A prisoner in rags, half starved, appears before them. The poor man has a good countenance: that adds to the interest. On the other hand is the inhuman jailer. It is the very figure that Salvator Rosa would have drawn for Iago in the moment of detection. Villany, fear, and conscience are mixed in yellow, and livid on his countenance; his lips are contracted by tremor; his face advances, as eager to lie; his legs step back, as thinking to make his escape; one hand is thrust precipitately into his bosom, the fingers of the other are catching uncertainly at his button-holes. If this was a portrait, it was the most striking that ever was drawn; if it was not, it is still finer."

This committee, first appointed February 25th, 1728-29, declared Thomas Bambridge, then warden of the Fleet prison, and John Huggins, his predecessor in that office, notoriously guilty of great breaches of trust, extortions, cruelties, and other high crimes and misdemeanours.

Public indignation, once aroused, was not willing to let Bambridge escape. He was tried, May 23rd, 1729, for the murder of a Mr. Castell, who had been forced into Corbett's sponging-house when the small-pox was raging there. Page, one of the most infamous of judges, persuaded the jury to acquit Bambridge; but the widow of Castell fought the case till the wager of battle was claimed, and Bambridge then, rather than fight, selected to be tried again. He was tried again, and was acquitted, but narrowly escaped being torn to pieces by the people. In December of the same year, they were at Bambridge again, and he was tried for stealing the goods of one Elizabeth Berkley, while a prisoner in the Fleet. The articles stolen included Flemish lace, gold lace, plate, and rings. They were worth thirty pounds, and were distrained for fifty-six pounds of rent due to Mr. Huggins, Bambridge's predecessor. Bambridge and his men broke open the door, and forced open her boxes. The poor woman was then turned on the Common Side, without a bed to lie on, and her mind became affected. Bambridge was again acquitted.

At the same session, Huggins, and Barnes, a turnkey, were also tried for the murder of a prisoner named Arne; but in these cases, and with these cases only, Page was merciful, and they, too, were acquitted.

Bambridge then actually petitioned government for compensation, "having been put to great charges and expenses; and, notwithstanding his acquittal, having for nearly seven years last past lost the profits of the several offices which were granted to him, but hath also been incapacitated from exercising his profession of an attorney and solicitor for his support and subsistence.

The petition, of course, proved fruitless, and he eventually destroyed himself.

But it was not only arbitrary cruelties and greedy exactions that made the prisons so infamous and so unworthy of English law and English justice. The freedom permitted by the jailers to all prisoners who had money, was even still more demoralising. However innocent a man was when he entered a prison, he was sure to leave it full of desperate resolutions, callous, heartless, and blood-thirsty. As a person of experience once said, an acquitted highwayman generally returned to the world to find his old captain hung, and himself ready to take his place. An episode of Jack Sheppard's story, as told in the records of the jail chaplain, is a good example of the disgraceful discipline of our old prisons. Sheppard, the son of a Spitalfields carpenter, was in August, 1724, lying under sentence of death in Newgate. In the old prison-house, burnt during the Lord George Gordon riots, there was, inside the lodge, a hatch with large iron spikes. This hatch opened into a dark passage, which led by several stone steps down into the condemned hold. Here prisoners were allowed to show their shaven heads and villainous faces to their often equally ill-favoured friends. It was through this hatch some women of Sheppard's acquaintance passed a file, with which he cut almost through one of the spikes. On the evening Jack's death-warrant arrived, the women came for a pretended last interview, broke off the spike, and dragged the slim thief through the aperture, although the keepers were drinking at the very time at the other end of the lodge. When Jack was caught in Clare-market, and a few months after condemned to death, he became the show of the town, noblemen visiting him to hear his adventures and his entreaties for the royal pardon. Sir James Thornhill published a portrait of him, and he was the lion of the month. Even on the very day of execution, money, sympathy, or friends had procured the incorrigible young rogue favours from the turnkeys; for when searched in the press-room, before ascending the cart, an officer found in his pocket a pen-knife, with which he had intended to have cut the cords that bound his arms, and to have flung himself from the cart, to escape down Little Turnstile, where the sheriff's mounted officers could not have followed him.

Dangerous mutinies also were not uncommon in the old London prisons. There was a very formidable one in Newgate in 1726. The leader was a blacksmith, named William Gates, alias Vulcan, a deer-stealer, of Edmonton, who had shot two deer in Enfield-chase, killed a keeper, and fired at two others. The man had never been tried for the offence, but had been sentenced to death by the cruel Black Act, 9th of George the First, because he had not surrendered, within forty days, to an order of council read, according to the act, on two consecutive market days in two market towns. He was helped by four of his companions, also under sentence. "These

desperate men took it into their foolish heads," says the astonished ordinary in his piquant account, which seems to have been quaintly interlined by a somewhat sarcastic Old Bailey reporter, "that they would not be hanged. The day on which they were executed, when I came to Newgate to give them their last exhortations and prayers, they would not allow any person to come near them, having got an iron crow into the prison, with which they had forced out stones of a prodigious bigness, and had made the breach two feet deep in the wall. They had built up the stones at the back of the door of the condemned hold, so that nobody could get at them. The keepers spoke to them through the door, but they were inflexible, and would by no entreaties yield. I spoke to them also, representing to them how that such foolish and impracticable projects interrupted their repentance, and the special care they should have taken in improving those few moments to the best advantage; but they seemed inexorable. I said that I hoped they had no quarrel with me. They answered, 'No, sir, God bless you; for you have been very careful of us.' Bailey said, that they would not surrender till they either killed or were killed. It was twelve at night before they began this enterprise; and, to conceal their purpose from the keepers, while part of them were working, the rest sung psalms, that the noise might not be heard. Sir Jeremiah Morden, one of the present sheriffs of London and Middlesex, came with proper attendance, and, desiring them to open the door, they refused it; upon which they [not the prisoners, but the sheriff and his men] were obliged to go up to the room over the hold, where there is a little place that opens, which is made in case of such disturbances. This shutter they opened, but the prisoners continuing obstinate, they [the sheriff's assistants] fired fifteen pistols with small shot among them, not to kill, but to wound and disable them. They retired to the remotest part of the room where the shot could not reach them, yet Barton and Gates, the deer-stealer, were slightly wounded in the arm. At last Sir Jeremiah Morden spoke seriously to them through the little hole above, desiring them to surrender. Barton asked, 'Who are you?' Sir Jeremiah answered, 'I am one of the principal sheriffs.' 'Show me your chain,' says Barton. Sir Jeremiah was so good as to show him his gold chain through the little hole, upon which they consulted, and agreed to surrender. After this they removed the stones for the back [of the] door, and, the keepers entering, Barton snapped a steel tobacco-box in the face of one of them, which made a little noise like the snapping of a pocket-pistol, and then gave him the box."

Imagine prisoners, condemned to death, gaining possession of a crowbar and working down two feet of a massive wall before they were observed by the keepers; and do not fail to observe the small shutter in the ceiling, expressly made for such contingencies!

That excellent man, John Howard, who wrote

in 1776, begins his book by remarks upon the jail fever. This disease was bred in the filth of neglected prisons. It would not, perhaps, have been heeded for another half a century, had it not irreverently, in 1750, carried off the lord mayor, one alderman, two judges, and most of the jury at the Old Bailey sessions of 1750. In 1772 it was again fatal, and that at last awoke the city. Howard found the new jail building at Newgate, and did not much like it. "Without more than ordinary care," says this true philanthropist, "the prisoners in it will be in great danger of the jail fever." The condemned cells were nine feet high, the smaller cells only about nine feet by six. The one double-grated window was three by one and a half. The doors were four inches thick. The strong stone walls were lined with planks, studded with broad-headed nails. In each cell was a barrack bedstead. Criminals, bold enough at their trial, were struck with horror, and shed tears, the turnkeys told Howard, when they first entered those darksome solitary abodes. The noise in the yard was distracting during the prayer-time in the chapel. Visitors to the press-yard at executions paid three guineas to the keeper.

The Fleet had been rebuilt before 1776. Howard describes it as consisting of four long galleries, with rooms on each side, and a cellar floor, called by the debtors Bartholemew Fair. On the first floor were the chapel, the tap-room, a coffee-room, rooms for the turnkeys and watchmen, and eighteen apartments for prisoners. Over the chapel was a dirty billiard-room, kept by a prisoner, who slept in the same room. The Common Side was a large room, with cabins opening from it. These were for men who were insolvent, and who lived on donations and the proceeds of the begging-box and grate. The amusements in the yard were skittles, Mississippi, fives, and tennis. The jailer's tap-house was frequented by butchers and others from the neighbouring market (a most demoralising practice). Every Monday night there was a wine club, and every Thursday a beer club, rioting till two in the morning, and vexing the more sober prisoners. April 6, 1776, there were two hundred and forty-three prisoners; wives and children, four hundred and seventy-five.

In the Marshalsea, Howard found two hundred and thirty-four prisoners. There were four rooms for women, and sixty beds for men; but many of the prisoners slept anywhere about—in the chapel or the tap-room. There were in the prison about forty-six women and children. There was a skittle-ground and a chandler's shop inside the prison. The excellent but intensely matter-of-fact philanthropist is good enough to observe that one Sunday in 1775, when the tapster's beer ran bad, there were no less than six hundred pots of beer brought into this prison from a neighbouring public-house.

The King's Bench prison, in May 1776, contained three hundred and ninety-five prisoners; besides two hundred and seventy-nine of their wives and seven hundred and twenty-five of their children. Two-thirds of these were within

the walls. There was a stocks in the prison, used for the punishment of blasphemers, swearers, and rioters.

We have improved in these matters since 1777. We have now perhaps gone to another extreme. In the twenty-three years preceding 1772, the total number of executions in London was six hundred and seventy-eight; yet far more than that number died in the same period of jail fever. Howard says that he saw nothing abroad that made him blush for his native country but the prisons. He tried successfully to show that villainess, debauchery, disease, and famine were not the necessary attendants of a prison; but though turtle-soup and sweetbreads are not yet the general diet of the Uriah Heaps of our day, we have still, we fear, much to learn before our prison discipline is worthy of our civilisation.

LICENSED TO KILL.

I QUITE agree with Socrates in many things. That eminent philosopher and I completely coincide in our estimate of mere physical science, but on a special point we are heartily and altogether agreed. If I remember right, Socrates designates as the "obstetric art" that department of human knowledge which, to persons circumstanced as I am, is most valuable. He lays down that every child, on his entrance to this world, knows everything, and will answer correctly the most difficult questions, provided his examiner only knows how to put his questions correctly. Shelley, I find, was a believer in this creed, and frightened a nurse into fits by seizing her small charge one day, and demanding to ascertain from it something about the essences of angels. To me the doctrine is most comfortable and cheering. I have the sweet consciousness that I know everything in my inner self, and that it was altogether owing to the obtuseness or ignorance of my examiners that the world was not alive to the extent of my erudition. The incapacity of my questioners in that obstetric art has been the bane of my life. How much the happiness of man depends on the intelligence of others! At school I was deemed a dunce and dolt, and was "kept in" or flogged accordingly, solely because my masters did not interrogate me properly. An infant—I am told that is a correct rendering of the word *pusio*—actually explained to Socrates the doctrine of the squaring of the circle, but then Plato knew how to question scientifically. Unfortunately, my questioners were not of the Socrates order, and I have been a martyr.

My friends—it is right to call them so—designed me for the medical profession, and, to say the truth, I was not averse to become an M.D. I knew a few fast young students, and I liked their life. It was an easy thing, I thought, to walk the hospitals, and assist the great surgeon by holding his instruments and bandages. The art of administering boluses and applying cataplasms seemed easy. Then there was so wide a

field for gathering experience in pauper wards! I believed I could shake my head, look solemn and be mysteriously silent, with the highest practitioners. It was something to frighten my female cousins—dear innocent girls—with appalling accounts of “magnificent operations.” They listened to me with curious interest and no small fear. I think Mary’s regard for me began with fear, and that then (sensible girl as she was) she thought of marrying me. A young surgeon who accomplished such extraordinary feats would, she believed, be a good provider, and would be able to cure her, no matter what happened to her. Unfortunately, before I could obtain a License to Kill, it was necessary to pass examinations. Here, again, arose the great barrier to my fortune. Success, you perceive, did not depend upon myself; it depended altogether on the way in which questions might be put to me: that is, in the obstetric skill of my questioners.

Through my boyhood and youth I had experienced the supreme ignorance of my interrogators. I never could answer them, and an ominous quaking of the heart, as the day of trial approached, warned me not to hope that the Socratic science had been vigorously cultivated now. I had walked the hospitals, attended the prescribed number of lectures, copied out notes made by men who had been fortunate in obtaining somewhat enlightened examiners, I had invested in a skeleton, made up twenty-two pages of the Pharmaceutical Latin Grammar, and tried to master those extraordinary hieroglyphics by which physicians will persist in marking the quantities of ingredients in a draught. May I, a hater of questions, venture to ask a question plainly? Why is it that prescriptions must be written in dog-Latin, miserably abbreviated? What magic is there in writing pil, pul, cyath, haust, instead of the honest English words which these fragments indicate? I know that these abbreviations puzzled me wofully, and that I nearly killed a wretched old woman—luckily, she was only a pauper—by mistaking the meaning of one of these cabalistic symbols. The whole world is behind the age. In village shops I still see monosyllabic signs in gold letters, labelling poisons, where the administering Æsculapius is the druggist’s younger son. I compassionate the insides of the village rustics, and think that the laud. tinct. and op. extr. might just as well be labelled “quietness.” But I am in advance of my generation—like Socrates.

The day of my examination came, and never in all my life did I meet with questioners so densely ignorant. They were not able to extract a single answer out of my inner consciousness. I ventured upon an expedient which had proved successful in a case somewhat similar to my own. A dignified examiner blandly asked me what I would prescribe for a case of aneuris cerebri. I politely replied, “I would implicitly adopt the formula given in his recent valuable paper on the subject.” A smile mantled on his tranquil features, and I believed I was safe.

Unfortunately, fools rush in where angels fear to tread, and one malicious fool—he was the youngest and the most ignorant of all my examiners—asked me to repeat the formula. Now, I never could get off Latin by heart. I never could see the use of it. To make a secret of medicine by hiding it under an outlandish tongue is un-English and unpatriotic. Despair, however, impelled me to violate my principles, and I endeavoured to supply an answer. I do not precisely remember what prescription I gave; but I know there was a general start among my examiners, and one of them rather stiffly said: “Young gentleman, that dose would kill a mammoth on the spot.” I was plucked.

My meeting with Mary was rather trying. She had rightly expected great things of me, for she did not know how great was the stupidity of men in high positions. The student who had operated most successfully in excising aneurism of the aorta, and restoring by artificial vertebrae the back-bone of a railway victim, could do anything, she thought. She, too, began to question me. Did I love her, as fondly now as then? Did I wish our engagement to continue? Would I be content to wait? &c., &c. These were intelligent questions nicely put, and, of course, I answered them most satisfactorily. But when she inquired, What I intended to do now? What medical school would I study in? When I should “go in” again? When she did this, and put other interrogatories of a similar kind, I lamented her deficient acquaintance with the Socratic theory, and was silent.

In my despair I hired “a coach.” This gentleman put into my hands a very little book in dreadful dog-Latin, containing answers to all imaginable questions. He directed me to learn by rote, every day, two or, if possible, three pages, and then for one hour daily he tortured me by putting the same question in every possible variety of form. He said that the one reply might serve for twenty queries, and he trusted that, by putting the questions in every imaginable shape, he would anticipate my examiners. He worked hard with me, and I mastered three hundred replies to three thousand imaginary questions. I was well coached, and could certainly repeat much more of the Pharmacopœia than I ever understood, but what of that? Disease was to be cured by medicine; medicine was prescribed by symbols: given the type of the disease and the symbols, all was easy.

I went before a Board in Scotland; but neither my coach nor I had calculated that I would be called upon, not only to write out prescriptions when the types of disease were given, but to translate any prescriptions my examiners might think of puzzling me with. I broke down here—broke down utterly. Next day, I found appended to my ill-used name, this note: “Lamentably ignorant—could not translate a prescription.” I venture to say it was not my function to translate a prescription; that was the druggist’s business. But remonstrance was vain, and one of my ex-

aminers insolently said, that he thought I had better devote myself to agriculture.

And now, more than ever, I had to mourn the ignorance of mankind. Everybody questioned me; everybody interrogated me unscientifically; of course, I was unable to give accurate or satisfactory replies. It is a fearful thing to be in advance of your generation, and to be possessed of theories which the generality of mankind cannot appreciate. Mary and her mother had come up to Edinburgh; the excuse was shopping; but they really came to share my anticipated triumph, and they witnessed only my fall. Mary was what unfeeling souls call a "sensible girl;" she had a little money of her own, and knew how to take care of it. On the evening of my examiners' failure, as I sat beside her—we were alone—she pressed my hand, and asked me, "What I really had to live upon?" A question so difficult to answer was never put, even to me. I fenced with it, played with it, tried to laugh it off; but Mary's blue eyes—grey at that moment—were fixed upon me. Minerva had grey eyes, I believe, but I do not like the character of Minerva. So, at last, I pretended to be angry, and got up a passion, but it was useless. Mary was very quiet, and very still. Gently disengaging her hand from mine, she said, "It would be madness to marry, unless I had some profession. She would wait any length of time for me; but it was better for both that we should not meet again until I had made some advance towards obtaining a livelihood."

I began to think that ignorance was contagious; for when I asked myself, what was I to do now, I could give myself no answer. (Mary is now hemming near me, unconscious that I am writing about that weary time, and she has forgotten the angry outbreak of passion which accused her of selfish and mercenary motives, when I had only reason to be angry with myself.)

A means of escape was opened to me by one who had been as unfortunate in his examiners as I had been. I had noticed at the door of a fine house in a fashionable street a crowd of poor sickly wretches, who swarmed upon the steps every morning from ten until eleven o'clock. At first I supposed the owner of the house to be a philanthropist, who gave out soup or bread tickets. But many of the men had ugly bandages about their heads, or their arms were in slings, and some supported themselves on crutches. The women were pale and worn-faced, many of them had children in their arms, whose low moans or piercing cries occasionally betrayed sickness or pain. One day, as the door opened to admit one of the number and let out another, the crowd parted for a moment, and I read, upon a bright brass plate of portentous size, the name of Theophilus Herbert Smith, M.D., surgeon and accoucheur. Can this be my Smith? I thought. Smith, of my old class, who was as unhappy as myself? Yes, it was my Smith. He had obtained his degree.

Smith was licensed to kill. I found out that Smith had bought a practice—that Smith prescribed for beggars as the best way of advertising. I resolved to see Smith and ascertain how this thing was to be done.

We had a jolly evening together, Smith and I, and a hearty laugh at those solemn examiners who had tried to puzzle us rather than to ascertain what we knew. It was a paying concern, this of Smith's, and I can vouch for the excellence of his claret. He laughed me out of my despair, told me how to proceed, and inquired after Mary. I do not precisely remember how that night ended, but I think I offered to prescribe gratuitously for all my landlady's family during the course of their natural lives, before I went to bed.

I am a benevolent person, for the world is prospering with me. I can afford to put all aspirants for a License to Kill, up to a wrinkle. Be it, then, known to all who meet with indiscriminating examiners, that there is a medical practitioner in Glasgow—a regularly qualified member of the College of Physicians—who can furnish a candidate for a dispensary or hospital with a medical diploma, for a consideration. The University of Giessen considerably grants degrees in absentia to all who can afford to pay for the accommodation. Money makes not only the man, but the doctor. The Glasgow practitioner will equip anybody with a diploma, for the small sum of thirty-seven pounds fifteen shillings—a fleabite when we think of the advantages to be gained. You pay twenty-two pounds by post-office order or bank-note bill at Giessen, and fifteen pounds ten shillings to the Glasgow practitioner. I suspect the first sum to be all that the liberal University of Giessen obtains, and that the fifteen pounds ten shillings is the honorarium or fee of the Glasgow practitioner. I think so, because he emphatically directs that that sum should be paid to him "here." In his letter, stating terms, the Glasgow practitioner informed me that, as "he was about to take out four medical diplomas at Giessen, and four from Pennsylvania, that week," I had better forward my money at once. There was an air of business about the transaction which delighted me. There were no examinations—no unscientific questionings—no writing out or translation of abominable prescriptions. You paid your money, and you got your degree. You could order a huge brass plate, with the magic letters, M.D., engraven on it, the moment you got your receipt for the money. The arrangement was most agreeable to me. I closed the matter at once. Mary discreetly forbore to ask any useless questions. She helped me to purchase my present business. I keep a bevy of wounded and ailing paupers as well as Smith, and I think my claret is as good as Smith's.

I found shortly afterwards that the Pennsylvanian degree possessed a great advantage. It could be obtained antedated ten or fifteen years. Once I was bitten with a mania for collecting ancient coins, and, want-

ing "a brass" of Caligula to complete my set of Roman emperors, I visited a dealer in antiquities who trafficked in such commodities. The old man was ill, but his assistant, having searched in vain for "a brass" of Caligula, gravely told me that he would have one made for me in two days, if I gave the order." He stunned me for the moment; but I gave the order, thinking that this coin would pass muster amongst the rest;—perhaps half my collection was formed of similar forgeries. So with medical degrees: It is an enterprising American agent who supplies this article in London: I do not know whether he deals also in wooden nutmegs, dummy clocks, or corn fixings, but he has a variety of diplomas, suited to the taste of all purchasers. There is evidently competition in the market, for his charge is but thirty-two pounds in toto. You can obtain a diploma dated five years back, ten years back, fifteen years back, if old standing as an M.D. be desirable, "without additional charge."

All this is most desirable to gentlemen in my position. The public seldom look beyond the brass plate upon the door, and if your diploma with its flaring seal be enclosed in a massive gilt frame, and hung up in your consulting-room, your respectability is established. Poor-law guardians have a proper respect for the pockets of ratepayers, and are by no means too inquisitive as to the source of your degree. The position of physician to a workhouse or dispensary gains a man other and more lucrative practice. A discreet treatment of a wealthy patient may make your fortune. Consult the idiosyncrasies of your patient, and lean as much as possible towards nature. If, as in my own case, you buy your degree from an American bagman or a Scotch practitioner, and you fall in with a wealthy patient, be careful to prescribe nice things; should there be an appearance of danger, call in some celebrated physician. As to the paupers, we all know that death is a relief to them. And I never heard of any objection made by guardians to a poor-house doctor who was followed by the undertaker as by a shadow.

But as if providence now especially favoured the victims of examiners, the General Medical Council are now mysteriously moved to benefit them still more. A portion of that body proposed, on the 5th of June last, that the diploma of any foreign university should be recognised, on proof being given that that university had adopted a satisfactory curriculum of medical study. No proof is required that the holder of a diploma really attended in person the prescribed course of study. The diploma is the sole test; consequently, if the proposition of the Medical Council be carried out, every purchaser of a diploma in absentia will rank, so far as the title M.D. is concerned, with the most eminent British graduates in medicine.

There is a dark as well as a bright side to every picture. The upholders of what I, and many like me, consider to be a monopoly,

oppose this generous concession of the General Medical Council. The British Medical Association have been recently feasting, physically as well as intellectually, in the Irish metropolis. Sir Dominic Corrigan, president of the Queen's College of Physicians, actually entertained the Association with an account of the manufacture of medical degrees, to which I owe my position and my Mary! Nay, he exhorted the members of the association to combine with him in opposing the liberal and enlightened proposal of the Medical General Council. Now, if Sir Dominic Corrigan carries his point, poor-law guardians will be compelled to pay something more than seventy-five pounds yearly for a doctor to physic paupers; and that, I submit, is a violation of the British constitution. Why should there not be free trade in physic as well as in everything else? Sir Dominic would establish in every county in England, a board of examiners—the very word is horrible to me—to test the qualifications of candidates for the degree of M.D. Nothing more disastrous to gentlemen like myself, who cannot translate a prescription, could be devised. The rates would be increased by one farthing in every pound, and a nutritious hospital dietary would be established in every workhouse in the kingdom. I really cannot see why a military officer should be allowed to purchase power to lead eight hundred men to death, if men who are unable to answer medical examiners should not purchase the Pennsylvania or Giessen degree, and be Licensed to Kill.

HOWARD'S SON.

A STORY OF THREE DAYS.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I. ARBOUR-HILL.

THE marriage had been long talked of in the district, but had come about in a quiet imperceptible way. The Captain Hallam who was to marry, had been quartered a few miles off from Arbour-hill, the house where the marriage was to be. He was asked over, and rode over pretty frequently, first, to get rid of ennui—afterwards, from a very natural interest, as those who saw the young girl, who was the precious stone of that house, could testify. The officer was a manly honest officer; fairly well-looking, with lively tastes and accomplishments, had good connexions, and was tolerably well off in the world. All the good people of the place were sincerely glad "that the Winters had got him;" those who were not such good Christians talked with a little depreciation of picking up a man "in a marching regiment," with only "his pay to keep himself on." The house where the captain had found his prize was just such a solid, handsome, and inviting casket as might hold such a treasure. It was in the green lanes of a warm and sheltered green country; it stood alone, as if it were in a vast demesne of its own, and yet it was only surrounded by a small meadow or two. The road that led to it was a by-road; the vil-

lage of Arbour was a mile and a half off. The house was old and yet new—burly and portly, full and contented, like an old-fashioned well-to-do gentleman, who yet went with the times, and wore as much of the modern dress as would fit him. The red of the bricks was ripe and genial. As gig or coach drove by on the high road, the driver or passengers got a peep of crimson that warmed and comforted them. The windows were bright, and set off with fresh clean paint, and over the old roof rose a little cupola, fresh and trim, though about as antique as an old cocked-hat. Between the road and the house was a tiny lawn, with cheerful beds of scarlet geraniums flowering in huge hillocks, and a bit of balustrade that gave a hint of terrace. This was Arbour-hill—as seen from the top of the passing coach, pronounced “an uncommon snug place” by the outsiders, and where Mr. Winter, who farmed in a “jolly” way, and Mrs. Winter, and Miss Lucy Winter, the jewel of the jewel-case, lived all the year round.

Inside, too, it was a miracle of comfort and brightness; airy to a degree, with the old-fashioned rooms, and the quaint twist of the stair, but with none of that old-fashionedness which brings dampness and strange unseen burrows and decay, and drifts up to a sensitive nostril sudden and unpleasant gales. And there were alterations and additions, and the rather straitened dining-room had been expanded into a handsome modern room. It was the most comfortable and compact of places. They said to Winter, “How *did* you light on this place? Where *did* you hear of it? What would you take for the plant and good will now, look, stock, and barrel?” At which proposal Lucy Winter cried out in piteous protest, “Oh, papa!”

With the exception of a little girl only five or six years old, this Lucy Winter was the only child, a gay, handsome, impetuous girl of seventeen, all flash and impulse. Some one calls her from the hall as she is heard carolling above, and down she “swings” the little twisted stair, with a sort of spring, “hand-over-hand,” as though she were a sailor coming down to the deck. It is a picture to see her as she stands with a little tinge of colour in her cheeks, pushing back her tossed hair, of which she had abundance of a fine honest auburn, perhaps a little rough too, and with a delightful smile of happy interrogation, says, “What is it, papa?”

A pleasant sight it was to see her running round the gardens. It was yet more pleasant to see her alight on the steps between the little tiers of gorgeous flowers that made a sort of porch to the house, in her habit and hat after her ride, when she would turn round with her cheeks flushed and hair that *would* be rebellious and in confusion, to look at her pony as he cantered round to his stable without a groom. She would give him a little touch of her whip, and he would frisk away, to her delight throwing up his heels as a

sort of salute, the family looking on from the windows. But it was for a horse she sighed—a grown-up horse, a real horse; for this pony was a mere plaything. She longed to go flying over the fields and ditches to join the Green Shields Hunt. But her father, fond and indulgent in everything, from sheer alarm could not bring himself to agree to the horse.

Now, was Captain Hallam coming very often, and brought as often a delicately-shaped mare with a skin like deep brown satin—a “thing that a child might ride.” And by dint of these excursions and exercises it had come to the stage with which the neighbours were now so busy. Mr. Winter, an “amiable, good man,” and a retired clergyman, had reluctantly given his consent, for he could not endure the idea of losing his child. But there were fervent promises of being always with him, and constantly coming to stay—a pleasant fiction, which no one believed in, as Captain Hallam was in “a marching regiment,” whose turn for Indian or colonial duty was about two years away. However, there was a long reprieve.

There had been busy times in the bright house, preparing. But there was no “fuss” or agitation. The necessary “outfitting” was only a sort of pleasure and excitement, all the family taking part and enjoying the selection. There was no sudden agony, no breaking down in tears over the finery as it comes home, which makes each piece of silk and lace, to the fond mother’s heart, a suit of graveclothes. For the arrangement was, that there was only to be a week’s “honeymoon,” as it is called, and then “Lucy Hallam” was to return, the captain’s regiment being only a short distance away.

It had come very close; the day after to-morrow was the festival. How many times had the lively girl flown up and down the little stairs between the hall and the upper rooms, where the finery was laid out, and where the village milliner, employed out of good nature, but under directions, was doing some good substantial country work? There, too, was a sort of little bazaar, where the friends’ presents were laid out. But the excitement of the day had set in towards three o’clock, when there was heard a peculiar sound of “pawing” up the little avenue, and when Lucy, rushing to the window, proclaimed, in musical tones, to all the house that “there was a lovely darling of a horse walking up the avenue led by a man with a letter!” The horse was a darling, indeed, with the most elegantly shaped aristocratic limbs, and an air of true aristocratic breeding. The letter was from a friendly squire who bred horses, and had always admired her ardour. He was an honest old bachelor, and it was a very delicate little offering, and offered with a rough affection. No wonder Lucy said openly, and with fervour, that “she could kiss him.”

The day after to-morrow was to be the day. Mr. Winter was to “marry” his daughter, though he declared he had forgotten all rites and offices, it was so long since he had put on a surplice. It was a long time from the days when he had

been toiling as a miserable curate on sixty pounds a year, until a relative died and left him well off. He would have gone on with his curacy, but the place did not agree with his wife, and he could not bring himself to what he thought the licensed simony of purchasing an advowson. But he had been promised the reversion of the village rectory—not on the death of the old incumbent, whom they all liked, but on his retirement, which was not far off. Here now was the day close at hand, and a pleasant night, the last but one though, yet still a little festival. When the passengers on the up-coach, going by about eight o'clock, saw the little "box" blazing cheerfully away like a bright lantern, to them it looked more than ever "snug," the very essence of snugness and warmth. If they could have drawn up the yellow blinds and peeped in, they would have seen two pictures of warmth, colour, happiness, and comfort. One was in the dining-room, with its sea-green walls, and where Mr. Trail, the grey-haired vicar, and Doctor Legge, the village doctor—who, it was said, knew more of the moon and stars than of physic—and Captain Hallam, and a chosen friend and brother-officer, Hillier, who was to be his "best man," and the host, were sitting round the fire taking claret.

The ladies had just gone, had crossed the hall, and were drawing in to their fire, which makes up the other picture of warmth and comfort. Mrs. Trail and her daughter, a darling friend of Lucy's, were staying in the house. They were all drawing in closer to the fire, to continue a little subject more confidentially, which had been just touched on as they left the dining-room.

"Oh, mamma," said Lucy, "he is certain to come. He promised."

"I am sure he will, dear," said her mamma, "and for a reason that I know."

"But what an interesting character," said Mrs. Trail. "The world is not so bad as my dear Trail preaches, when there are men with such deep feeling as that."

"My dear," said Mrs. Winter, "I could not describe it. I assure you it haunted me like a nightmare for months after. It was really terrible, his rage and grief mixed together. At times I thought his reason would go, or *had* gone. Men *can* love their wives, you see."

Lucy, all white muslin, and like a blooming flower, from some instinct glanced over at the glass, and perhaps coloured. Was she thinking how this affection was as nothing to that of *her* Captain Hallam?

"You know," went on Mrs. Winter, "I being Colonel Howard's cousin, and the only woman relative (and knowing each other as children), could do this, which I think no one could have courage to do. It was a dreadful business altogether, from beginning to end, and in fact, only for me—poor Edward, his brother, who really was innocent in the matter——"

"He had a brother, then?" asked Mrs. Trail, getting interested.

"A dear fellow," broke in Lucy, impetuously ;

"a dear good fellow. Do you remember how he ran and stopped my horse, mamma?"

"Yes, indeed, dear. But for him I don't know what would have happened."

"That was the worst part. He talked of Edward as a criminal, and of pursuing him, and bringing him to justice; and this idea of vengeance took possession of him. So you may imagine what a duty I had. I never went through so much. But I soothed him at last."

"I still say," said Mrs. Trail, "there is something most interesting about him. It seems all so natural, even that fury and grief——"

"Ah, but if you knew it all," said Mrs. Winter, stirring the fire, and drawing her low-cushioned chair closer. "It is no family secret——"

"You never told me, mamma," Lucy said, standing up and looking in the glass.

"Because you were a child, dearest," said her mother, smiling; "now you are to be a lady, and are entitled to hear everything."

The answer to this compliment was Lucy's going over impetuously, and putting her arms about her mother's neck, and covering her with kisses. Her mass of hair all came tumbling down over both their faces like a mass of ivy that has been blown from its support. "Tell us," she whispered, "about Howard."

CHAPTER II. COLONEL HOWARD.

"THEY will be ten minutes at their wine yet," said Mrs. Winter, "and Howard's story won't take five. You know that my uncle Sir Philip and his wife were proud—in fact, were called 'the proud Howards'—and as their estate was a little encumbered, they made up their minds that William, our colonel, should make a splendid marriage—good blood and good money—and retire. When he was with his regiment in Ireland they had actually arranged it all—found out a rich plain girl, of the very highest family—I won't tell her name now, as it is all past and gone—and negotiated the marriage. They even got him six months' leave of absence, and wrote to him at Dublin to come over at once. What do you suppose was the answer they got?"

"I can guess, mamma," said Lucy, already absorbed, her fine eyes beginning to enlarge.

"So can I," said Mrs. Trail. "He was engaged to some one else."

"Not only engaged, but married; married to a handsome Irish girl who came out at Dublin Castle and the balls, and whose father was descended from a chieftain, I think: which, of course," added Mrs. Winter, without any sarcasm, "was all well in its way; but I *believe* the poor *Mahoneys*—that was the name—had nothing to support the family but their daughter's face and flirting. His estate, such as it was, was in the Encumbered Estates Court at the time. He had been married some months. You may conceive all that took place. Sir Philip got a stroke of apoplexy from fury, and was near dying. It was not unnatural that they

should be thus shaken, for rank and station was *their* life and blood. The couple had been married some months. The one of the family, however, who was most furious was Edward, William's brother. He went over to Dublin, saw him and her, and poured out a torrent of reproaches, and even insults."

"Oh, mamma!" cried Lucy, with a burst of reproach; then checked herself.

"Yes, dear, your friend lost his good sense and restraint just for *that* once. By-and-by William became colonel, and a very young colonel; and then his regiment was suddenly ordered away to India. *She* was very delicate, and the physicians said she must not be taken there. In fact, she was more delicate than he thought—perhaps the Dublin Castle and the Dublin balls—no matter. He did not know what to do at first, but took a sudden resolution. He came to me to tell me. I confess I was astonished when I heard it, and was strongly against it; for I knew what was the temper of Sir Philip. His resolution was to go to them straight, appeal to their generosity for his unprotected wife, and throw himself on their goodness, which he said he knew. He did so. How do you suppose he succeeded?"

"I know he succeeded," said Lucy, half starting from her chair, "for Edward was there, and he is the most generous forgiving fellow!"

"I never was so astonished," went on Mrs. Winter, "as when he wrote to me that he *had* succeeded—when he said they had behaved in a manner he dared not have expected—not with great warmth, certainly, but still with justice and calmness. They said, if he liked, she might stay with them while he was away. I heard afterwards that she shrank from the idea, and begged that she might stay anywhere rather than with them. What she really wished was to go back to her own people, but she knew that they were of a quality that her husband shrank from, and she did not even name them."

"What was she like, mamma?" asked Lucy, abruptly.

Mrs. Winter paused, and looked round on them smiling.

"I never saw her myself, but you recollect our going up to town to have your photograph done?"

"To be sure, mamma; and thirty were taken; and M. Le Bœuf asked to be allowed to have more taken off for private sale."

"Well, she was like that," said her mother, laughing—"at least, so Howard says. I sent him one when I asked him to come, and you never saw what an eager agitated letter he wrote, asking where I got it, what had I been doing? That is the real thing that I believe brings him here. We might as well have thought of drawing a Trappist from his cell."

"How strange!" said the ladies. And Lucy, with that most natural instinct which guided every motion, stood up and tossed her head before the glass to see *what* the "likeness" must look like.

"I am not going to make this a long story,"

said Mrs. Winter, "so I will be short. He went to India, was to arrange his exchange there, and be home in a year. She went to his relations, poor soul!"

There was a pause.

"They were bitter proud people, with very hot sense of injury. *She* was easily cast down. They had never forgiven her or him, though I believe they tried to do so. Edward never had forgiven, and always said his brother had been shamefully and cruelly taken in. He came there, and said she was 'vulgar.' In short, she was miserable. They gave her no rest, without, I believe, intending to make her miserable. She was delicate. Her spirits sank. She made no bother. Very soon little Fred, Howard's son, was born, which only made Lady Howard more bitter against her. In short, when about eight months of the year had run out, and the exchange had been made, and we at home did not know it, and when Howard might think of coming back, she began to give way. Ah! They were very harsh to her—a poor stranger in the land—and Lady Howard, I believe, wore her out with the harsh and cruel things she was always saying—how that she had ruined them all, and disgraced their family, with more to that effect. At last, when a letter had actually set out, flying home with the joyful news that Howard was to start in a week, her final sickness set in, and she pined away out of this world. They did not reproach themselves, for they were not conscious of having done anything. The one that was shocked, as though he had been suddenly wakened up from a dream, was Edward."

"I know it, mamma!" said Lucy, impetuously. "I could have told you that; he is full of feeling."

"He is," said her mamma, smiling. "Well, we may conceive Howard's arriving to find such dreadful news waiting him. Edward met him in France to tell him. It was terrible. And yet it was not so much grief as fury. He called Edward," added Mrs. Winter, in a low voice, "*murderer*. And he said he would live for no other end than to reckon with them all one by one."

There was another pause. She went on:

"This was only a burst of insanity on Howard's part. A year after, when he was composed, he told them that he could not bear to see them, and that he dared not forgive them. Since then, seven years ago, he has wandered about with his son. The old grief and fury have given way, and gradually, I think, a love the most overpowering for this child—a love that is increasing every day and every hour—is softening him; and the most wonderful proof of his being softened is his coming here."

"And the boy?" asked the vicar's wife.

"A *darling*!" said Lucy, running to the table. "Look here!" And she brought over her photograph album.

In a moment they were all admiring a little fellow in a Scotch dress, leaning, his hand in his pocket, with a smile of composure—the smile of

a "boy of the world"—against a very low table. He had a charming air of gracious composure. The ladies agreed he was indeed a darling.

"Now, mamma, tell about what we have settled."

"Oh yes," said Mrs. Winter. "Poor Edward, who really never did anything in the matter, and yet has been bitterly contrite ever since, and has tried again and again to see his brother, is to be here to-morrow. Do you see now?"

"Ah, yes," said the vicar's wife. "But still, if he is in the same temper——"

"But Lucy has a plan."

"Leave it to me," said Lucy, pacing round and round the room in delight. "I have my plan, and it shall succeed. Hush!" She held up her finger. "Was it the gentlemen coming in? Yes, their voices were in the hall. But Lucy heard another sound. In country houses, ears are as trained as the ears of Indian hunters, and can hear a sound of wheels on gravel even at the lodge gate.

Mrs. Winter started up. "It must be Howard, dear!" The gentlemen came in, in delightful spirits. Mr. Winter and his wife went out into the hall.

CHAPTER III. THE SON.

THROUGH the open door, in the dark night outside, a chaise was waiting. In a moment those round the bright fire in the drawing-room heard the sound of shuffling and pattering feet. In a few minutes more the door was opened gently, and Mrs. Winter's voice was heard. "Will you come in here, Cousin Howard?"

A tall gentleman, with a sunburnt face and large brown moustache, and the softest of blue eyes, advanced through the doorway, and then drew back irresolutely. He held "Howard's son" by the hand, who was in a dark little Scotch dress, and who looked round on all the company with a pleasant smile of greeting.

"I am afraid," began Colonel Howard, "that after our journey——"

But he was interrupted, for, with cheeks glowing and eyes flashing, Lucy came from the other end of the room straight to him, and said:

"How are you, Cousin Howard? I am Lucy!"

He half started back, and seemed to shade his eyes from the lamp. "You?" he said. "You? Ah, yes. The picture! I am glad to see you, dear," he said, taking her hand affectionately, "and am delighted to hear about all this. But I am ashamed coming in this way—a dusty way-worn traveller."

Every one remarked what a sweet soft voice he had, and a gentle address, while to ladies he had a sort of reverential courtesy with a faint bloom of "old fashion" on it, but which was not the less welcome.

Mrs. Winter eagerly said these were only neighbours, and these "neighbours" with delicacy drew away, and sat in different parts of the room. But the father's eye wandered over

to his son, who, having already introduced himself, was the centre of a group of ladies. He was sitting on one of the low chairs "nursing" one of his little stockinged feet, and talking away about their journey with great volubility. He was telling them of his travels, and how he was not in the least tired. He had very delicate little features, a little nose, a pretty mouth, a fair skin, and his father's soft eyes. "I was not in the least sick in the packet," he said, still nursing his little leg. "I never am—neither I nor papa. There was a French child, though. You should have seen him!" And little Fred laughed and crowed over the abasement of the hereditary enemies of his country. "Party here to-night? Papa doesn't like parties," he went on, "*nor do I*. Do you play games here? I can play."

They were charmed with him; he prattled on with such composure. The captain had introduced himself, not with that mock respect and burlesque "humbugging" with which young men "draw out" children, and whom they use merely to show themselves off. This cruelty is merely offensive, and is often felt by sensitive childish minds, and often a wistful little face turns anxiously to search the empty one that is busy with this folly. "How d'y'e do?" said the boy, graciously. "I am very glad to have the pleasure of knowing you. Would you tell me, please," and he hesitated a little, "who the lady is, over there, that you were talking with?"

The captain laughed. "Oh, that is the prettiest, finest young lady in the world. At least I think so."

"Not in the world," said the boy, shaking his head gravely. "Because you have not seen all the young ladies in the world. But still—oh yes, she is very pretty."

"Then why are you so curious about all this, Mr. Howard? I declare I am beginning to be a little jealous."

"Ah," said the boy, quickly, "you are going to marry her?"

"Yes, you have guessed it," said the captain; "am I not a happy fellow?"

"Indeed I think so," said the boy, swinging one leg, and in the same wistful sincere way. "She is very nice—much nicer than the French ladies."

Lucy came running over.

"Here she is herself," said the captain, gaily; and then added, in a half whisper, "I won't tell her what you said—about her not being the finest and prettiest young lady in the world."

"I didn't mean *that*," said the boy, colouring, and stepping back with a little defiance; "you know I would not say so."

Lucy was down on her knees, holding his hands and looking into his face. "What is it that you don't mean, dear?" she asked. "Tell me—we are to be the greatest friends."

He shook his head. "No, no."

"What! You refuse me?"

"No; but you know," he said, hesitating, and still swinging on one foot—"you know you are to marry *him*, and there won't be time."

"But we shall meet afterwards," she said, still on her knees, and holding his hands, "and you must promise to come and stay with me."

"And with *him*?" asked the boy, with a knowing look in his eye. "He will be the *husband*—and if he does not choose—"

"But I do choose, and always will choose—if you will do us the honour, that is. Recollect, it is an engagement; you come very soon; I choose. Besides, whatever Lucy chooses I choose."

Young Fred took the hand that was held out to him, and shook it.

"The only thing," he said confidently, "is papa. He is very particular about my going anywhere by myself—that is, he does not wish that I should go anywhere without *him*. And I don't wish. When you come to know papa, you will like him very much. We go everywhere together. We have travelled an immense deal together, papa, and I, and Andy."

"And who is Andy, dear?" said Lucy, still on the carpet; "tell me."

"Bless me!" said the little fellow. "Don't you know Andy? He is our servant—our own servant"—in a confidential tone—"He came with poor dear mamma from Ireland (I never saw mamma that I can remember), and papa and I have agreed that we are never to part with Andy. Papa talks a great deal to him, but he does not like my talking much to him, as papa says I might learn to speak like Andy, who has a strong brogue. But papa says that should make no difference in his character, because he is the most faithful and trustworthy man that ever lived. And I assure you I *feel* it a good deal, not talking to Andy, because I *know* he is good. And papa means, when Andy gets old and lame, to pension him off; and, when I am grown up, I shall pension him too; for I like Andy, and should wish to be kind to him; and when you come to know him, you will like him too."

They listened to these little assurances with great pleasure, the little man was so earnest and assured. Captain Hallam looked across to Lucy with delight.

"Give me a kiss, you darling!" she said. "I like you as if I had known you from a child."

The little man put forward his cheek with great dignity.

"And I like you," he said; "and when *he* said you were the fairest young lady in the world, I did not mean to deny it—indeed no. I should not be so unpolite—no, indeed."

"Give me another kiss, you pet!" said Lucy, in great delight.

Now was heard a gentle voice calling, from the side of the room: "Fred! Fred! take care you are not talking too much, and tiring our friends."

He walked over himself. The little man went to meet him, and took his larger hand.

"Yes, papa. Come and talk—do. Oh!"—to the little circle—"he can talk, papa can; you'll be *dee*-lighted."

They all smiled.

"This little fellow and I," said Colonel Howard, in his gentle half-apologetic voice, "have been great companions. We have travelled and seen a great many things together—have we not, little man?"

"Yes, papa," said the little man, looking up at him; "and we are to see the world regularly when I get bigger—he has promised me—and I am *never* to go to school."

"Can you sing or play?" said Lucy.

"No, no," said Colonel Howard, a little hastily; "he will only tire you."

"Just as papa pleases," said the little man, with a bow. "Some people like my singing; others, as papa says, get tired."

"Nonsense!" cried the captain, eagerly. "Do sing for us; we shall take it as a great favour."

"Do, dear," said Lucy.

"*Would* you like it, really?" asked the little man.

"Indeed we all would, and I particularly."

"Well, papa; may I?"

"As these ladies are so kind," said the colonel, looking round doubtfully; and he walked slowly back towards the fire, and sat down by his cousin.

Without the least shyness, the little man looked round on all the company, and began a French chanson—CADET ROUSSEL—with a burden:

"Ah! ça! oui! vraiment!

Cadet Roussel a trois enfans,"

and which he sang with the greatest seriousness. There was great applause when he had finished.

"Oh, I can sing other things," he said, "in quite a different style. There was one song which Andy taught me; but," he added, with sudden earnestness, "that was *long* before papa wished that I should not speak so *much* to him—it was indeed—though papa might not like it on *that* account. But, oh! it is such a *very* funny Irish song; and if you heard Andy sing it—"

Lucy had run over to the fireside with the request. She was whispering to Colonel Howard.

"You won't refuse me? Let the dear boy sing. He is getting quite at home with us all. Do let him—Andy's song—do!"

Colonel Howard, half smiling, half grave, made a protest. "For shame, little man," he said; "he picks up all these low songs; though, indeed," he added, correcting himself, "he never sings them without consulting papa. Well, yes, this once more, as these ladies and gentlemen are so kind as to call for it."

Holding Lucy's hand, with his knee on the sofa, and a steady serious look into the faces of all the company, he struck into "MULLIGAN'S WEDDIN'," in which his little clear pipe, trying to struggle conscientiously with the Irish patois and brogue, and his perfect and earnest seriousness, had the most curious effect:

"Dere was feastin' and fightin',
De neighbours delightin',
And singin' and pratin',
And lots of the batin'
At Mulligan's weddin'.
Whack foldi dididdle follers!
Whack fol di do!"

They were delighted with this little performance. The doctor enjoyed it. "A capital song, sir, and well sung. Thank you, sir."

The little man replied, with a bow, "I am so glad you liked it."

"I dare say, sir, you have plenty more on your list," said the doctor, "and would favour us."

"No, no," Howard interposed; "that will do very well. In fact, it is time to be thinking of bed. What do you say, little man?"

"Whatever you please, papa." Then to Lucy: "Did you like 'Mulligan's Weddin'?" Then he began to laugh with a hearty child's laugh. "So funny, you know—a wedding *here*; and then, Mulligan's. Ha! ha! Isn't it now?"

"Getting late," said the doctor. "I must go and look after my stars. This will be a great night for observations. I shall search and search until I read something good there for Miss Lucy."

"And do you really do all this?" said the captain.

"I have a regular observatory, a fine glass, a meridian no less, and go regularly to work. Do you ever see the Southern Counties' Times? No, I should say not," added the doctor, laughing; "the circulation is limited, and the matter very local. Well, there is an astronomical letter there every week from the present speaker."

"I should like to see it very much," said the captain; "I once had a little taste that way myself."

"Put on something warm and come," said the doctor. "It's only across the lake, and my boatman is waiting."

The little man had been listening with distended eyes. He put up his mouth to Lucy: "Whisper," he said; "make them take *me*. Oh, do!"

The doctor heard him. "And why not?" he said. "We would not keep him long, and Captain Hallam could bring him back, though it is rather late."

The little man crowed with delight, and clapped his hands. "Let us go at once! Come!" And he began to pull at the doctor's arm.

The father, who was at the other end of the room, heard something of this, and came over. "At this hour? Not to be thought of, my dear child! Folly! I can't allow it. Go to bed."

Utter blankness and misery came into the boy's face, and he hung down his head.

"My dear child," said his father, lifting him

till the child's face was on a level with his own, "why, you would catch cold in your chest, and take ill, and die; and then what would become of poor papa? To-morrow we will drive over to this gentleman's."

The boy gave a deep sigh of disappointment, but of resignation. He looked back wistfully towards the doctor, who embodied such exquisite and ravishing charms—instruments that turned, and screwed, and went up and down; an inexhaustible source of entertainment. But he turned to his father.

"Papa, I should not like to take cold, and die, and leave you. So please to ring for Andy to come and take me to bed."

At that moment the door opened, and a short figure of a man, with a curious quaint head, stood looking in. He peered round, and then, without the least concern or consciousness of any one's presence, called out, with a nod,

"Master Fred, it's time now."

"Go," said his father. "There's Andy come for you. Wish all these ladies and gentlemen good night."

This ceremony the little man achieved with courtly form, going round and putting out his hand, and, in the ladies' instance, putting up his cheek for the kiss which he seemed to know would be inevitable. The father's turn came last, and he lifted him up to give him a warm embrace, and looked after him with rapt fondness. Taking Andy's hand, the little man walked away.

Then the clergyman and his wife and the rest took their leave for the night. The captain and the doctor came into the hall muffled in great-coats. It was a fine clear night, and they could see the stars without the aid of the doctor's telescopes. The lake was at the back of the house, and the doctor's own boat was waiting—"My cab," he always called it.

But Colonel Howard and Mrs. Winter sat long in the drawing-room after all the rest had gone, talking, we may suppose, over some passages in life, long gone by. The French clock on the chimney-piece struck twelve, and half-past twelve, and one. Lucy had not yet gone to her bedroom, but fluttered nervously about the hall and passages and the now ghostly dining-room. For she knew very well what troubled pictures were raised in the drawing-room. Suddenly the door opened, and he came out with a candle; as he saw her, he suddenly started back, but recovered in a moment.

"Oh!" he said, "how strange, how wonderfully strange! For the moment I thought—no matter now—you ought to be asleep, my dear child."

"I was waiting, dear Cousin Howard, to say good-night to you."

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

BOOK V.

CHAPTER V. "FOR AULD LANG SYNE."

It was an awkward meeting. Mabel's pride for once did her good service. She would not for the world have betrayed any emotion to the strangers' eyes then fixed upon her. She returned Arthur Skidley's bow with so freezing a salutation, that that usually self-satisfied gentleman was quite abashed for a minute or two. To Alfred Trescott she bent her head slightly, but without any marked hauteur. "I have known Mr. Trescott," she said, quietly.

Alfred played his part to perfection. He was silent, unobtrusive, respectful; though whenever he was unobserved, he watched Mabel stealthily, like a wild beast in ambush. He listened modestly to the musical critic, who at once began to talk very fluently. All this gentleman's speech was about himself, which circumstance afforded the others breathing time to collect their thoughts. The critic was flattered. He acknowledged to himself that he seldom found an audience so completely attentive. By-and-by other persons came into the room, and the conversation became general. Captain Skidley had been so frozen by Mabel's bow, that he edged away to the other end of the room, and endeavoured to get himself thawed under the bright glances of a pretty walking lady who had been playing in the little opening piece. Presently Alfred Trescott seated himself near Mabel, and spoke to her. "I was afraid of presenting myself before you to-night," he said, in a low voice; "indeed, I should not have had courage to do so, had not my friend urged me to come. You know you once forbade me ever to appear in your presence again. Have you forgiven me yet, Miss—Bell?"

Mabel's voice betrayed some emotion as she answered, "I am willing to forgive, Mr. Trescott, if you will allow me also to forget."

"I would sooner die than offend you, indeed I would. I was so rejoiced, so proud, to hear of your brilliant success. I may say that, may I not? for old acquaintance' sake, and the memory of your kindness to Corda. I was in the theatre last night with Lady Popham. How

exquisite it was. You—you did not see *me*, of course?"

If he had thought to lay a trap for her, he had miscalculated. The warm blood rushed over her cheeks and brow, but she replied, with the unhesitating truthfulness that was habitual with her, "I did see you. Lady Popham's figure attracted my attention to the box."

"Then," said Alfred, humbly, "I was right. I fancied, I feared, that you purposely left my poor flower to die at your feet. You need not have been so severe, Miss Bell. I threw it amongst the other bouquets as a tribute to the *artist*. My camellia was meant for Juliet, not for you." It was subtly said.

Mabel felt a pang of mortification and shame. She had placed herself in the position—so painful a one to a modest girl—of having attributed to the passion of a lover a mere act of courtesy. At the same time, the seeming candour of his words struck an answering chord in her frank nature. "Juliet thanks you," she said, looking full at him with her clear, innocent eyes.

"If Corda could but know with whom I am speaking now!"

"Dear little Corda! Is she well? Is she in London?"

"Yes; she is here. You know, of course, that your cousin's husband, Signor Bensa, offered to take her as articled pupil? Silly child, she could not bear to leave her father and me; and we, perhaps more silly, let her have her way. If I make any success, she shall share it."

"You have not yet appeared in London?"

"Not yet. Lady Popham is trying to make some arrangements for me. I dare say my fate will soon be decided."

Mabel was here called away to go upon the stage. When she next entered the green-room, young Trescott was not there; but she saw him once more that evening. It was after the conclusion of the tragedy, as she was going to her room.

"Miss Bell," said Alfred, stopping her, "one word—only one. Would you—may Corda come to see you? It would make her so happy."

Mabel hesitated. He read her thought instantly. "Corda, Corda *alone*," he said, quickly. "I should not think of intruding on

you; besides, I am really busy, and anxious about my début. But the child, it would be such a joy to her to see you. She is very lonely for hours together, poor pussy-cat."

Mabel's heart melted directly. "Oh, let her come," she said. "I shall like to look on her sweet little face again."

"And—pardon me, one instant—your address? They refuse to give it at the stage door, you know."

"Mamma and I are living at Desmond Lodge, Highgate." Then she said "Good night," and was gone.

"Betty on their way home in the fly retailed all Mrs. Hutchins's gossip to her young mistress. At first the latter was a very inattentive listener, but the mention of Clement's name roused her.

"Mr. Charlewood in London?" she said, with involuntary eagerness.

"Yes, miss, and ever so poor; and he's living by himself, and going on awful. Anyhow, that's what that woman said, miss."

"She is a gossiping, untruthful person, Betty. You must take no heed of what she says."

"No more I doesn't, miss. I thought as how she were a lying, for all it comed out so slippy."

A few days later, Corda Trescott appeared one morning at Desmond Lodge, Highgate. The maid-servant who answered the bell found the child alone at the gate. She asked timidly for Miss Bell, and was shown into the garden at the back of the house, where Mabel, and her mother, and Dooley were assembled. Mabel was walking up and down with a book in her hand. She was studying Beatrice, which was to be her next part. Corda advanced on to the lawn, and then stood still, too diffident to make her presence known. Mabel, turning in her walk, saw the patient little figure, and ran to welcome her. The child clung to her with a low cry: "Oh, Miss Mabel, I'm so glad!" Then Dooley marched up to them with a wooden spade over his shoulder, and his nose and chin, out of shelter of the brim of his straw hat, burnt chocolate colour. He put his small paw into Corda's hand patronisingly.

"'Oo is glad to see Tibby, isn't 'oo?" said he, comprehending that Corda's tears were not tears of sorrow.

By-and-by, when Corda had shaken hands with Mrs. Saxelby, and was seated on a garden-chair making a long daisy chain for Dooley, Mabel, observing the little girl closely, was pained to see how thin and pale she was, and how she flushed and trembled at the least word. "You have been growing very fast, Corda," said Mabel; "almost too fast for your strength, I'm afraid. I declare you are as tall as I am."

Corda smiled shyly. "Not quite, am I? But indeed I am very well; only I don't feel extremely strong, you know."

"I'm 'trong," observed Dooley, tugging at the garden-chair. "I can tip 'oo yight up."

"Be quiet, Julian. Is that the way you behave to a lady, sir? And how is the voice, Corda?"

The child's bright hazel eyes filled with tears. "Oh, I think it's quite well, thank you, Miss Mabel; but they won't let me sing. Sometimes I do long to sing."

"Why do they not let you sing, dear?"

"Because sometimes it makes me cough a little. Only a very little, though."

Mabel said no more, but she watched Corda anxiously when the child was not observing her. Corda's hat was quite new, and so were her boots, and the little silk mantle that she wore. Her frock was shabby, and considerably too short for her. Mabel's womanly observation taught her that only such articles as could be bought ready-made were fresh and bright, and she drew the conclusion that Corda had been hastily rigged out for this visit.

"Here's something for you to see. An invitation, Mabel!" cried Mrs. Saxelby, suddenly. That lady was seated in an easy-chair under a tree on the lawn, opening letters. One of the first results of the young actress's sudden leap into notoriety had been to make her a mark for the pursuit of a host of odd people whose existence she had never dreamed of. Lion hunters, begging-letter writers, anonymous critics, enthusiastic admirers, saintly persons with an irrepressible desire for her conversion, enterprising tradesmen, unappreciated authors, and stage-struck aspirants thirsting for public favour. The pile of letters left for Miss M. A. Bell at the stage door of the Royal Thespian Theatre were bewildering in their number and the heterogeneous character of their contents: and after a few trials Mabel found that she must give up all attempt to read and reply to them all. It became Mrs. Saxelby's daily employment to open and sift this mass of correspondence, reserving for Mabel's perusal only such grains of wheat as were discoverable in the heaps of worthless chaff.

"An invitation, Mabel. And such a singular little note! I can scarcely decipher it."

Mrs. Saxelby handed to her daughter a tinted envelope of the newest pattern and fashion, sealed with an enormous coat-of-arms. The envelope contained a formal card of invitation to a conversation at Lady Popham's house, and a note in her ladyship's queer cramped characters. "There is a card for me also," said Mrs. Saxelby.

Mabel read the note with some difficulty. It ran thus:

"My dear Miss Bell. I hope you will dispense with my presenting compliments, or anything of that sort, because really, after witnessing your most exquisite performance of Juliet the other night, it is quite impossible for me to bridle my enthusiasm sufficiently to third-person you. Enchanting! Quite enchanting! Such a finish, such a grace! I had the pleasure of witnessing your début at Kilclare, and take some credit to myself for discovering *then* that

a new planet had swam into the ken of playgoers. Now *will* you come to me on Thursday after the play? You shan't be lionized (more than a charming girl must be prepared to endure everywhere), because almost everybody else will be a lion too. I have an assembly of artists and authors, and clever people of all kinds, who honour my house every Thursday evening. I know I ought to have called on Mrs. Saxelby, and would have done so, but your Cerberus at the stage door wouldn't give me your address, so I send this to the theatre. I shall positively await your reply with *trembling* anxiety. With my sincerest admiration, believe me to be, my dear Miss Bell,

"Your faithful servant,
"LAURA POPHAM."

Mabel had read thus far with a resolve to decline the invitation. Her mother looked over at her wistfully. "What do you think, love?" she asked.

The answer was on Mabel's lips, when she perceived that on the fourth side of the sheet of paper there was a postscript. "I hold out as a *bait* the fact that my god-daughter, Geraldine O'Brien, will be in town and at my house on Thursday. She has just come home from foreign parts.—L. P."

"Well, Mabel?" said Mrs. Saxelby.

"Dear mamma, to tell the truth, I was just about to say 'No' very decisively. But—"

"Why 'no,' Mabel? Why 'no very decisively'?"

"I said there was a 'but,' mamma. We will discuss it by-and-by. What do *you* think?"

Mrs. Saxelby wished to go, and wished to be persuaded to do as she liked. Nothing ruffled Mrs. Saxelby's smooth temper more than having to make it apparent that she was following her own good will and pleasure in trifling matters. There was no set purpose of deceit in this, either. She would acknowledge having enjoyed such and such things, but could rarely be induced to confess beforehand that she desired them. "We will speak of it by-and-by, as you say," she replied, plaintively. "I will do as you wish, my dear child, but I don't know how my throat may be by Thursday."

Corda spent a day of seemingly unalloyed enjoyment. Dooley had imbibed the notion that she was delicate and must be cared for; and he displayed his manliness and gallantry in various well-meant attentions, which, however, were occasionally of an embarrassing nature. For example, he insisted on carving her meat for her at dinner, as was done for himself when he was sick. He hacked the roast mutton with his little blunt silver knife, and heaped the salt in an avalanche on the side of her plate.

"'Oo must have some *pork* wine," pronounced Dooley, magisterially. "I had *pork* wine when I was ill. Tibby gave it me in a 'poon. It's nasty. 'Oo *must* have some."

Then he brought the kitten up-stairs for his guest to see, and conscientiously explained to her why, though he liked that pussy-kitten, he could not regard her with the same affection that he had bestowed on the old one at Hazlehurst.

"Yes, Dooley dear," said Corda, gently stroking the little animal that purred aloud in the enjoyment of her soft touch. "Yes; I think I should love the 'sorry one' best, too."

When the time drew near for Mabel to go to the theatre, she asked Corda if she should set her down anywhere, or how she should send her home. "Oh no, thank you," replied the child. "We live a long way off, across Blackfriars-bridge. Papa will call for me at six o'clock."

"Who brought you here, my dear?" asked Mrs. Saxelby.

Corda blushed scarlet. "I promised not to tell, ma'am."

"Not to tell? How extraordinary!"

"It was a very kind person indeed; but he made me *promise* not to tell. I don't know why. But I did promise, so I ought not to tell, ought I?"

Mrs. Saxelby and Mabel of course refrained from any further question on the subject, though the former was very curious about it. Mabel had her own solution of the mystery. She guessed that Alfred had brought his sister to Highgate himself, and had put this prohibition on the child, in order to avoid even the suspicion of wishing to force himself on Mrs. Saxelby and her daughter. The supposition placed him in a favourable light, and softened Mabel's heart towards him more than she had once thought possible.

Mr. Trescott came punctually to claim his little girl. He waited in the hall, and declined to come in, as he was pressed for time, and must be in the orchestra of the theatre at which he was engaged before seven. Corda said "farewell" with shy heartfelt thanks, expressed and understood.

"You must come again and play with Dooley, my dear," said Mrs. Saxelby.

"An' I will wheel 'oo yound de garden in my barrow!" shouted that young gentleman. The barrow in question was about a foot long. But Dooley spoke in perfect good faith.

"You must come and stay a week with us, Corda," said Mabel. "The fresh air and the flowers will do you good."

"Oh, thank you so very much, dear darling Miss Mabel; but I can't do that."

"Can't do it, Corda? You like being here, and you have plenty of time."

"It is like heaven here, I think," returned the child. "It would be beautiful, but I can't, indeed. I must stay as much as I can with *them*. Perhaps, you know, I may not have so very much time after all."

When Corda was gone, Mrs. Saxelby returned to the subject of Lady Popham's note. "Do as you please, Mabel. I will make any effort

you wish; only decide." To decide was the one effort Mrs. Saxelby could not make.

"You would have no objection to accept the invitation, mamma?"

"I, my darling? Even if I had—but I have not—for *your* sake I would accept it willingly. Don't mind me."

"Then, mamma," said Mabel, abruptly, "we will go."

CHAPTER VI. MISS O'BRIEN MAKES AN ODISIOUS COMPARISON.

THERE was a strange "combination" in the musical world, said Lady Popham, against Alfred Trescott. There had been from time to time several such "combinations" to quench the flame of genius when fanned by her ladyship's jewelled hands. It was very singular. "Almost," said Lady Popham, in moments when cloud predominated in her April skies, "almost as though one were pursued by a Destiny. Like *Œdipus*, and those kind of people, you know."

Lady Popham had "lain in the lilies, and fed on the roses of life;" and I think she found some satisfaction in this idea of a stern Destiny that pursued her. A stern Destiny that was not too stern; that did not make her hungry nor ragged, nor mad, nor drunken; neither moved her to commit murder or forgery; nor even took the shape of kleptomania, causing her to hanker unlawfully after silk stockings on her hosier's shop-counter. But a polite Destiny, admissible into the best society, that just gave a little artistic relief, and prevented her life from being a mere Chinese picture without any shadows at all.

She had invited all the most competent critics of music to her house to hear Alfred play. She had fêted these people, and courted them, and flattered them, but without avail. Some of them were soft, and some were stern in manner; but in the main they agreed in their verdict upon the young man's playing. Great charm, wonderful tone, sweetness, purity, and admirable intonation, but—it wouldn't quite do.

"Why not?" insisted my lady. "Why, why, *why* not?"

Well, Mr. Trescott, had better have another year's first-rate teaching, and, above all, another year's *hard work*. There was unsteadiness in his passage playing, occasional want of breadth and finish in the style. It was very good. At times, admirable. But, upon the whole, not exactly up to the mark for one aspiring to the position of a first-rate solo player. Lady Popham must be aware that the standard was now a very high one. His competitors would be men of European fame, who had devoted their lives to their art. Mr. Trescott had natural abilities and gifts of an exceptionally high order. He might do anything, *if*—, &c. &c. &c.

All this annoyed Lady Popham mightily. It annoyed her for two reasons. Firstly, because, being in her butterfly way a kindly, generous, compassionate old woman, she felt for the mortification thus inflicted on her protégé.

Secondly, it annoyed her because the chief vanity and ambition of her life was to be reckoned a high and competent judge of art and artists. She had never before met with this stiff-necked and open opposition to her own expressed opinion. Her old friend, the Neapolitan Maestro di Capella (who was so valuable and confidential an ally of hers in her favourite pursuit, that he might with justice have described himself on his professional cards as "Purveyor of Geniuses, by appointment, to Lady Popham"), would never have thought of contradicting her in this way. And *he* was a clever musician, and a learned, and a profound, and, above all, an Italian; which was in itself a diploma of connoisseurship. Old Altalena always pronounced *miladi's* taste perfect. And she supposed *he* had a professional reputation to maintain, as well as these Messieurs Brown, Jones, and Robinson.

Lady Popham had never seen Altalena wrinking up his well-shaped snuffy old nose behind her back, in contemptuous amusement at her ignorance. And as to professional reputation—why, all the virtuosi in Naples knew that *miladi* was an English woman; and what artist could be said to risk his professional reputation by merely encouraging a baby's admiring delight in its penny whistle?

But what was merely an annoyance to Lady Popham, was to Alfred Trescott a serious misfortune. His prospects of fame and money seemed to fly before him like the mirage. It was characteristic of this young man, that while his practical knowledge and artistic instinct confessed the justice of the critics' adverse verdict, he hated them for pronouncing it, as bitterly as though they had conspired to malign him. He grew gloomy and discontented, and betrayed that he was so, in his manner. Alfred's was essentially a nature in which "familiarity breeds contempt." And when once he had become habituated to the manifestations of luxury and wealth which surrounded his patroness, and which at first had kept his insolence somewhat in check, he began to show glimpses of the native ferocity of his temper even to her. During all the time that they had been in London, Lady Popham's purse had supplied Mr. Alfred Trescott very liberally with money for his weekly expenses. He had no money of his own, and his father's poor earnings barely sufficed to feed and clothe himself and Corda. Alfred had accepted all these benefits from Lady Popham as loans to be repaid when the golden opportunity should arrive of dazzling the world with his talents, and receiving solid coin of the realm in exchange for them. He had artfully contrived to convince Lady Popham that she had unsettled his life, torn him from the enjoyment of a modest competence earned by his own industry, and beguiled him with ambitious dreams, the onus of fulfilling which now rested with her. She began to be afraid of Alfred Trescott—afraid of what he might say to her. Frivolous and superficial as she was, she began to know that there were dark

places in Alfred's character which she shrank from exploring. He had already dropped one or two hints that substantially amounted to a threat of what he might be driven to do if he found things going badly against him. The poor old woman was quite unhappy about him at times, and cast about in her mind for some means of permanently benefiting him, and frustrating the "combination" that opposed his success. She had hitherto found that the most efficacious temporary panacea for his ills was a bank-note. Up to a certain point this was a remedy easy to administer. But then it *was* but temporary. Alfred would—metaphorically—gulp down his bank-note in the morning, and appear again in the evening gloomy and misanthropic, as became an unappreciated genius. Besides the uncertainty attending his début, there were other circumstances contributing to embitter him. Mabel was as far removed from his pursuit as ever, and Clement Charlewood was dwelling in the same town with her. Alfred's resentment and desire for vengeance, on the score of Clement's disparaging mention of him to Lady Popham, had by no means cooled. If he had been brilliantly successful—if he had taken the town by storm, and leaped into notoriety—he would still have hated Clement Charlewood, and would have desired to injure him. But the desire would have been dulled a little, and put out of sight to await a favourable opportunity of satisfaction. Now, however, all the mortification and checks that his vanity and egotism were suffering, served as fuel to the fire of his evil passions. In this posture of his affairs he persuaded Lady Popham to invite Mabel and her mother to one of her weekly assemblies. His motive in doing so was by no means a single-minded desire to pass some hours in Mabel's presence. His feeling for her—though he still professed himself "in love" with her—was by this time very close on the border-land of hatred. But at least it was very far removed from indifference. He wanted to have her *within his reach*; whether to avenge himself for her repulse of his proffered love, or to fall at her feet in a paroxysm of devotion, was not quite clear even to himself.

Lady Popham's weekly conversazione was always very crowded. There was wont to be a large proportion of second-rate lions in her assemblies, and a sprinkling of third-rate ones also. But these lesser animals contributed a liberal share to the evening's entertainment, lifting up their voices in a way that seemed by contrast to make the big lions "roar you as gently as any sucking dove." My lady's eccentric pursuit of genius, and her not very solid judgment in art matters, combined to fill her saloons with a crowd from the ranks of the unappreciated: a numerous body, it would appear. But some celebrities, with whom the world had dealt kindly, were to be found there too.

Mabel and her mother arrived at Lady Popham's mansion soon after eleven o'clock on the Thursday evening fixed upon, and found the spacious rooms brilliantly lighted and filled

with a heterogeneous crowd. As their names were announced, my lady sprang from her chair and hurried to the door to meet them. Mrs. Saxelby had never seen Lady Popham, and although Mabel had warned her to expect something eccentric, she almost started with astonishment at the first sight of their hostess. The little woman wore a long train of rich blue satin covered with fine old lace. Jewels glistened on her withered throat, in her ears, and on her arms. She had a round patch of rouge exactly in the centre of each cheek. Her eyebrows were thickly blackened, her wig dressed into a luxuriant mass of curls, and on the top of it she wore a delicate, fragile, dew-besprinkled wreath of wild flowers and ferns. It was the airiest, lightest, most graceful thing in the world, just adapted for a very young and lovely girl, with whose fresh beauty it would have harmonised admirably. Nodding and trembling as it did on Lady Popham's head when she came forward with quick mincing step and extravagant gestures, it rather suggested associations with Bedlam. But Lady Popham could assume a very winning manner when she chose, despite her absurdities. And she bestowed so gracious a welcome on Mrs. Saxelby as to put that lady at her ease immediately.

"Arthur, give Mrs. Saxelby your arm, and take her to my sofa in the little drawing-room."

Captain Skidley advanced somewhat timidly. Bashfulness was not usually his most marked defect, but he had not forgotten Mabel's bow. However, on seeing the gentle lady-like widow, looking very fair and pretty in her dove-coloured silk dress, his spirits rose again, and he conducted her to the sofa with much gallantry. He even remained by her side talking to her for some time, and as she listened with seemingly absorbed attention to everything he said, and looked very sweetly at him out of her soft blue eyes, the Honourable Arthur Skidley was afterwards heard to declare that you might say what you liked about Miss Bell, or whatever her name was, but that, in his deliberate judgment, she wasn't a patch upon her mother.

Lady Popham drew Mabel's arm through her own, and made the tour of the rooms with her.

"Are you tired?" she asked at length. "You are very pale. So good of you to be here. Come into my little drawing-room; Mrs. Saxelby is there. I have a special sofa there off which bores are warned more or less civilly. I retain a body-guard of lads for that service. They find it amusing. The average boyish intellect is not of a high order, I find."

So chatting, she made her way to the special sofa, where Mrs. Saxelby was already installed. As Mabel was about to seat herself, a young lady pressed forward through the throng and took her hand. "Dear Miss Earnshaw," she said; "welcome!" It was Geraldine O'Brien. The two girls interchanged a few cordial words in a low voice. "I want to talk to you comfortably," said Miss O'Brien. "Can't we get out of this mob for five minutes? There is a

quiet nook in the conservatory behind the hall; will you come with me?"

Mabel glanced at Lady Popham, but that lady was occupied with a new arrival—a poet who dated the decline of English poetry from Chaucer, and was anxious to found a school for the revival of the golden days of literature. He had written some very pretty things, and had had them printed in black letter. He had brought with him a copy of his latest production to present to Lady Popham, who inspected it through her eye-glass. "Charming!" she murmured. "I can't make out a word of it. How quaint!"

"You would soon read it with a very little practice," said the poet. "As a mere question of beauty, it is vastly superior to our square angular type."

"What's this word?" asked my lady. "Chancery?"

"Oh no, not Chancery, certainly! By no means. It is—let me—see, 'chauntynge.' Chanting—singing, you know."

"To be sure! Chauntynge! *Very* quaint."

Seeing the old lady thus occupied, Mabel ventured to glide away with Miss O'Brien. But they had not gone many steps before Lady Popham's shrill voice called to them to stop. "Where are you going, you two?" she screamed. "Now, Geraldine, that's *your* doing. Méchante! Why are you picking my pocket of Miss Bell in that manner?"

"Godmamma, I don't want to steal her; only to *borrow* her for five minutes. May I not?"

"Umph! It's uncommonly bad manners, but I suppose you may. Bring her back punctually, scioccherella!"

The two girls walked away together. They descended the stairs and entered a little conservatory opening from the hall. It was full of perfume and colour, though the latter was subdued by the faint light of a single alabaster lamp that hung in the doorway.

"I was so glad to hear of your coming here," said Geraldine.

"I dare say you were surprised too, Miss O'Brien. But I hope you will not think me guilty of any disrespect to Lady Popham, when I tell you that my great—nay, my only—inducement to come was the prospect of seeing you."

"Was it, indeed? And I wished to see you so much! And to say a word about our friends the Charlewoods."

It was the very subject on which Mabel had desired to speak. She had been debating in her own mind how she should introduce the topic, and Geraldine broached it thus simply, and at once.

"Oh, Miss O'Brien," said Mabel, "are they in London? Are they doing well? I heard, by an odd accident, something of Mr. Clement Charlewood. But he was said to be quite alone, and in great poverty. You, of course, have heard all particulars respecting the family whilst you were abroad with Augusta."

"Augusta! Don't talk to me of Augusta! She is the most cold-hearted, selfish—Well, perhaps it does not become me to speak of it, but her indifference to her family disgusts me. It was a very long time before I could prevail on her to let me know their address in London. I do not think she would have given it to me at all, but for her husband. Malachi at last laid positive commands on her; and then she apologised for the vulgar neighbourhood in which they were living! Is it not incredible?"

"Then they are *all* in London?"

"Oh yes; all of them. I went to see Mrs. Charlewood directly I got to town. There were only she and Penelope at home. Both looked worn, but Penny especially so. She was pale and very thin, but as full of courage and energy as ever."

"Are they—is Mr. Charlewood likely to do well in his new engagement?"

"He? There can be no doubt of his doing well anywhere, I should say. But there is trouble about that wretched boy Walter. His poor mother confided the whole story to me when Penny was out of the room, engaged in some household duties. Walter is clerk in a West-End bank. His employers have been for some time dissatisfied with his carelessness; but the other day there was a serious inquiry into some of his accounts. A sum of money could not be accounted for. It was not a large sum, but——"

"Good Heavens! You do not mean that they suspected his honesty?"

"I cannot say that, exactly. Mrs. Charlewood did not tell her story very clearly; and she was crying very much, poor soul. But the matter ended in Mr. McCulloch being spoken to. He is the head of the building firm that employs Clement, and had given some kind of guarantee to these banking people for Walter. Clement managed to persuade him that his brother had been merely guilty of inaccuracy. The money was forthcoming, Walter was sharply admonished, and the affair blew over. But Mrs. Charlewood said they had lived in constant dread and anxiety ever since."

As Miss O'Brien spoke, the idea dawned on Mabel's mind that her manner and language were not those of a girl who had once been Clement Charlewood's affianced wife. Could it be that she should be on such terms of embarrassed friendship with the whole family, if she had broken an engagement of marriage with Clement on the score of his ruin and poverty? While she was so thinking, Geraldine said, abruptly, "I wonder what the truth was about that money!"

"About the money?"

"The money that was missing at the bank. I have a private theory of my own about the matter, that I can't help believing to be the true one."

Mabel turned pale, and looked at her inquiringly.

"My theory," pursued Geraldine, in a low voice, "is that Walter took the money for some temporary need, intending to return it; that he was unable to do so; that Clement suspected the truth, and, at the cost of a hard struggle and sacrifice, himself replaced—What's that?"

"What?"

"A rustling noise amongst the flowers there by the door. Did you not hear it?"

They listened. All was still until the opening of a door up-stairs let forth a gust of sound: voices talking and laughing, and the crisp notes of a pianoforte.

"Come," said Geraldine, "I shall be scolded for having detained you so long. I return to Ireland at the end of this month. I may come and see you before I go away, may I not?"

As the two girls left the conservatory and advanced to the staircase, they found Alfred Trescott on the lowest step, having apparently just descended. He bowed, and stood aside in silence to make way for them. Mabel, mindful of Corda's visit, spoke to him.

"We were so glad to have your sister, Mr. Trescott," she said. "You must let her come again soon."

Then the ladies passed up the stairs. Geraldine pressed Mabel's arm to her side impulsively.

"Forgive me," she whispered, "for speaking of it, but I cannot refrain from saying how rejoiced I was to hear that you were not engaged to that young man."

"I engaged to him? What in Heaven's name do you mean?"

"No, no; godmamma said that you had refused him. She was a little angry at first, but I suppose he has talked her over."

"It is due to him, Miss O'Brien, to say (since you have heard so much) that Mr. Trescott has behaved well since—since making that unfortunate mistake. I believe he now regrets it as much as I."

"That's well," replied Geraldine. "But yet—don't trust him, don't believe in him, don't be off your guard with him. I cannot tell you why, but I have a shrinking horror of him. Did you ever catch a snake's eye? I did once. Don't laugh. I am perfectly serious. It was in some exhibition or other that I saw the brute coiled up quite motionless in a glass cage. The people with me were lost in admiration. It was a richly marked reptile, covered with bright waves and bands of colour, with lines of fine black tracery running through them. My friends were holding forth on the beauty of its speckled skin. My attention was caught and bound fast by the creature's glittering eyes that were fixed upon me. Cold, bright, venomous, cruel. There was such a pitiless wickedness in their fixed gaze that I understood for the first time the stories of little birds giving up all hope and fluttering helplessly into the jaws of a serpent. Ugh! I was cold with horror. Well—I never look

at Alfred Trescott's beautiful eyes without a sensation of dread. They are so exactly like that snake's!"

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

CULLODEN.

EVERY one who admires the works of Hogarth, will remember his inimitable March to Finchley. That picture represents the rabble rear of King George the Second's Guards staggering past the Adam and Eve public-house at the north-west corner of Tottenham-court-road, on their way to meet the Pretender at Culloden. They are encumbered with Moll Flaggons of the most disreputable character. Their costume is garish, clumsy, and ungainly; yet the tight and cumbrous uniform, with hideous white spatterdashes, those conical fool's-caps with brass plates in front, have been under fire at Dettingen and Fontenoy. Before they taste the Adam and Eve gin and ale again, they will have let the breath out of many a bagpipe, in spite of the greed of the Campbells, the ire of the Drummonds, the pride of the Grahams, and the fierceness of the Murrays. Even that smart, pretty boy, the fifer, will march straight at the gleaming claymores and the fluttering tartans, as cool as if he were going to troop the colours in Palace-yard on a quiet Sunday morning.

It was a cold February day in 1746 that Hogarth went slyly to watch the Guards march north; for the Duke of Cumberland, recalled by the news of the defeat of Hawley's veteran cavalry by the rough rush of Charles Stuart's Highlanders, reached Edinburgh on the 30th of January, after four days' hot posting. There was quite a scene at a military levee in St. James's Palace the day before the gallant but rather tipsy Guards started to Scotland by way of Finchley. King George had called together his officers, wishing to send on reinforcements; but was unwilling to order the Guards because they had only recently returned from a harassing campaign against the French. The king was a "dull little man of low tastes" (Thackeray)—a little, dapper, choleric fellow, with a red face, white eyebrows, and goggling eyes; he was a bad husband, an un-English king, and a cruel father; he swore at his subjects; he smuggled away his father's will; he would kick his coat and wig about in his indecorous passions; he even injured Dr. Ward's shins; yet it must be confessed he was a high-spirited, bold little soldier, for he had fought stoutly at Oudenarde under those great captains, Eugene and Marlborough; and at Dettingen he had advanced on foot, and, amid a "feu d'enfer," shaken his sword at the combined horse and foot of France. He was in earnest now, fully resolved to die king of England, and, if his son, the duke, was repulsed, to head Ligonier's and Pulteney's men, and have a last grapple for the crown. The Duke of Newcastle—fussy, false, and shambling; ridiculed by Smollett as the butt, yet the master, of England—was of course at the levee.

The king spoke to his officers of the precarious state of the country, and asked all who were willing to meet the rebels to hold up their right hands, and those who would rather not, to hold up their left. Up instantly went every right hand. The little red-faced man burst into tears, bowed, and retired. The next day the Guards marched, and, at the corner of Tottenham-court-road, our little quick-eyed friend, William Hogarth, intercepted them with his sketch-book. Years afterwards, outside the gate of Calais, the painter saw some of the Highlanders the Guards met at Culloden, ragged, beggared exiles, lying on the stones munching stolen onions, dining on a pinch of snuff, and thinking of the distant lakes and mountains with that passionate homesickness that seems peculiar to the mountaineer.

When Hogarth's picture was taken to the king, he grew very red and furious indeed over it. He did not like his Guards being made fun of.

"I hate bainting and boetry," he spluttered. "What? A bainter burlesque my Guards! He deserves to be bicketed for his insolence. Away wid the trumpery." Bicketing was hoisting a soldier on the sharp back of a wooden horse out on the parade in St. James's Park, and was by no means a joke. Hogarth also effervesced when he heard this, and dedicated the picture at once to his Majesty's rival, the King of Prussia; by the same token, he put only one *s* to Prussia, and was much bantered in consequence.

The Young Pretender, according to the Whig accounts, though he looked a noble and a gentleman, was no hero. The Jacobites compared him to Robert Bruce, and were never weary of praising his kingly courtliness, his affability, his gallantry, and his handsome person. He was in reality a good-looking young man, with a bright complexion and fair hair. The Tories believed they saw in his not very acute and rather sensual face the hard lines and ill-omened expression of the Stuart race. His eyes were small, but lively, his neck short, his chin inclined to double. He generally wore a short tartan waistcoat and trews, his blue garter, at his button-hole a St. Andrew's cross hanging by a green ribbon, but no star. When marching with the army, he donned a broad blue bonnet edged with gold lace. At the Holyrood balls, when leading his fair partisans with the white breast-knots down the dance, he appeared either in a dress of fine silk tartan with crimson velvet breeches, or in the English court dress of the period, with a diamond star glittering on his breast.

On the 12th of April, the Young Pretender being at Inverness, the Duke of Cumberland—a corpulent young man, with rough and arrogant manners—forded the Spey at the head of the English army. He reached Elgin on the Monday, and on Tuesday Nairn, only sixteen miles from the insurgents. On the 15th, being his birthday, the army lay at Nairn, and were feasted with brandy, cheese, and biscuit.

On the 14th, the Prince ordered his drums to beat and his pipes to "skirl" through Inverness

to collect his half-starved and undisciplined men, and the Highlanders shouted as he walked through their lines: "We'll give Cumberland another Fontenoy." That night he bivouacked in the park round Culloden House, four miles from Inverness. Orders were sent to collect the Frasers, the Keppoch-Macdonalds, the Macphersons, the Macgregors, some of Glengarry's men, and the Earl of Cromarty's Mackenzies, who were scattered over the country in various predatory expeditions. The men that day had only a small husk bannock each, and many of them therefore retired to Inverness in search of food.

The only hope Charles had of success was to retreat to his best friends, the mountains, decoy the duke away from the sea and his victuallingships, and lure him into defiles and ravines, where his cannon would be sacrificed and his dragoons useless; but the young man was eager for fighting, for his men were starving, and their ardour was fast melting away. There was Inverness to protect, and the Irish and French officers were for holding out on the moor, which was in parts boggy and unsuited to cavalry. Lord George Murray, however, who had the true military instinct, disapproved of the ground, as many great authorities have since done. He was wisely for falling back to a high, undulating, and boggy tract on the south side of the river Nairn, which would have been inaccessible to the duke's horse and guns; but his colleagues were all against him. A night attack on Cumberland's camp was then unanimously agreed on, and seemed to promise some hopes of success. The duke's revelling army was to be surprised and cut to pieces by the broadswords before it could recover the first fierce and unexpected onslaught. The English camp was only nine miles distant across the moor, and it was hoped they would reach it at about midnight. The Pretender gave, as a watchword, his father's name,

"King James the Eighth."

Then embracing Lord George Murray, who started at eight in the evening with the foremost column, he placed himself at the head of the rear guard. The order was to use no fire-arms, only dirk and broadsword, to cut down and overturn the English tents, and stab at every bulging or projection in the canvas. But even "the stars in their courses fought against Sisera:" all went wrong. Many détours were necessary to avoid bogs and splashes. The van guard fell behind, the men dropped aside, and could not be kept together. It was two in the morning before Lord George reached the old house of Kilravock, three miles from the duke's camp. It would be daylight directly. A drum beat in the distance, or a horse neighed, and it was presumed the enemy was alarmed. Lord George reluctantly gave the order to retire. The Prince in his first anger accused his faithful and only sound adviser of treachery; but, when he cooled, he agreed in the necessity of the measure, and exclaimed,

"'Tis no matter. We shall meet them, and behave like brave fellows;" but the Highlanders, broken in spirits from want of food, were not like the men who at Preston had swept off arms with a single blow of their scythe-blades, or who, single-handed, had driven before them flocks of dismounted dragoons. Still they were at bay and in earnest, full of fight, and proud of their former successes against the king's troops.

And now let us describe the field of battle. Drum Mossie Moor (Culloden) is a large heathy, mossy, melancholy moor, traversed longitudinally by a by-road, and sprinkled with a few shielings, each with its little tributary kail patch. It is two miles inland from the south shore of the Moray Frith, five miles from Inverness, and ten or twelve from Nairn. Inverness was behind the rebels; on their right, a rolling range of blue Ross-shire mountains across the river Nairn; on their left, the sea, with the park of Culloden stretching downwards towards the shore of the Frith. To the east, says Robert Chambers, the moor spreads away like a shoreless sea, as far as the eye can reach.

The Prince's army, drawn up in two lines, consisted of only about five thousand men. The right was protected by the turf walls of a small farmstead. The left extended to a plashy morass, in the direction of Culloden House. In the front were the clan regiments of Atholl, Cameron, Appin, Fraser, Macintosh, MacIachlan, Maclean, John Roy Stuart, Farquharson, Clanronald, Keppoch, and Glengarry. The second scanty line comprised the low-country, the French and Irish regiments, Lord Ogilvie's, Lord Lewis Gordon's, Glenbuckett, the Duke of Perth. Four small cannon were placed at each wing, and four more in the centre. Lord George Murray commanded the right wing, Lord John Drummond the left, and General Stapleton the second line. Charles himself stood with a small body of guards upon a mound in the rear of the whole.

The front ranks of the Highlanders were armed with muskets, broadswords, pistols, and dirks. They carried on their left arms a round wooden target covered with leather, and studded with nails. They had also small knives stuck into the garters of the right leg. Some of the rear rank men had no guns nor targets, and were shoeless and half naked. They carried their cartridges in pouches on their right side. Many of them wore the philabeg, or kilt, pulled through betwixt their legs, so as to leave the thigh almost naked. The artillerymen, also in kilts, had reared beside every gun, cylindrical shields of wicker-work to protect themselves. Those of our readers who have seen a Highland regiment, can picture to themselves the large-limbed, stalwart swordsmen, in the prime of their manhood, looking as if they *could not* die; the white cockades of the Cragmen gleaming, their dark-green, black, and scarlet tartans fluttering in the cold moor wind that shook the oak, yew, and box-tree badges in their bonnets.

About eleven in the forenoon, the dim grey line of the distant moor, bright with April

sunshine, gloomed and darkened with the advancing lines of Cumberland's army, that gradually widened out, and glistened with steel points. The Prince went out to the moor, and ordered a cannon to be fired, to summon his stragglers.

The royal army was disposed in three lines; the centres of all the regiments of the second line being behind the terminations of those of the first, and those of the third line occupying a similar position in regard to the second. Thus, the various bodies of which the army consisted were in a manner indented into each other. Betwixt every two regiments of the first line were placed two cannon. The left flank was protected by Kerr's Dragoons (the 11th), under Colonel Lord Ancrum; the right by a bog; and Cobham's Dragoons (the 10th) stood in two detachments beside the third line. The Argyle Highlanders guarded the baggage. The disposition thus made was allowed by the best authorities to have been admirable; because it was impossible for the Highlanders to break one regiment without finding two ready to supply its place. The insurgent army was also allowed to be very well posted, upon a supposition that they were to be attacked.

There is a contemporary print which represents the English army as it now appeared. The burly choleric young duke wears a star on the breast of his long, stiff, gold-laced coat, and is adorned with a close curled wig and a three-cornered cocked-hat. He is riding, and pointing out a regiment with his walking-cane. The grenadiers have cocked-hats, long surtouts, sash-belts, swords, and long white gaiters. The fumes of the Adam and Eve ale have dispersed long ago in this keen Scotch air. The colours rise and blossom from the centre of each regiment. The officers, with their spontoons (half-pikes), stand at the wings. The drummer-boys are a little in advance. The dragoons look solid, but clumsy; their skirts are long and loose, their massive boots square-toed, their stirrup-leathers larger, their pistols bigger, their carbines more unwieldy than those our cavalry now use. Men of the Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim character are in those ranks side by side with young Wolfe (afterwards the hero of Quebec), and officers of the Colonel Gardiner stamp; simple-hearted, pious, and brave.

Ever since the routs of Preston and Falkirk, the duke (who really had some head, though Fontenoy, like the Balaklava charge, was only a magnificent blunder) had been studying how to make the bayonet superior to the broadsword. Hitherto, when a Highlander came flying down at King George's grenadiers, winged with his stormy tartans, he caught the bayonet in his target, then turning it aside with his brawny and hairy arm, leaped in on the defenceless soldier, dirk in one hand and swinging claymore in the other, often killing two men at the same moment, one with each hand. The duke, no mere strutter about parades, had thought out a remedy for this. He conceived

that if each man, on coming within the proper distance of the enemy, should direct his thrust, not at the man directly opposite to him, but against the one who fronted his right-hand comrade, the target would be rendered useless, and the Highlander would be wounded in the right side, under the sword-arm, before he could ward off the thrust. Accordingly, he had practised the men during the spring in this new exercise. When they had taken their morning meal, they were marched forward from the camp, arranged in three parallel divisions of four regiments each, headed by Huske, Sempill, and Mordaunt, having a column of artillery and baggage upon one hand, and a fifth of horse upon the other.

Duke William's speech to his men betrayed some anxiety as to the behaviour of the soldiers we saw start to Finchley. They were to be firm and collected, and, forgetting all past failures, to remember the great object which had brought them to that Scotch moor. He represented the enemy to be merciless, and that hard fighting was the only chance of safety.

He was grieved, he added, to suppose that there could be a person reluctant to fight in the British army. But if there were any there who would prefer to retire, whether from disinclination to the cause, or because they had relations in the rebel army, he begged them, in the name of God, to do so, as he would rather face the Highlanders with one thousand determined men at his back, than have ten thousand who were lukewarm. The men, catching enthusiasm from his language, shouted, "Flanders! Flanders!" and impatiently desired to be led forward to battle. It was suggested to the duke at this juncture that he should permit the men to dine, as usual, at one o'clock, as they would not probably have another opportunity of satisfying their hunger for several hours. But he rejected the proposal. "The men," he said, "will fight better and more actively with empty bellies; and, moreover, it would be a bad omen. You remember what a dessert they got to their dinner at Falkirk!"

This was like the young hard martinet, who forgot that we English at least always fight best when well fed; but Duke William was a man who never had any pity. The army advanced in formal military order, the hedges of bayonets glancing and flashing in the cold sunlight. The crimson colours flaunted, and one hundred drums, rolled valiantly by little cocked-hatted men, sounded a challenge to the angry Highlandmen. Lord Kilmarnock predicted defeat to the white cockades, when he observed the duke's cool, measured, determined advance. About six hundred yards from the rebel lines the marsh became so deep that the soldiers were up to their ankles in water, and the artillery horses floundering in the bog, some of the men slung their carbines and dragged the cumbersome guns through the brown swampy pools. As the moor was dry to the right, the watchful duke then ordered Pulteney's regiment to join the Scots Royals, and another body of horse to cover the left

wing. At five hundred paces from the embattled clansmen the duke halted his troops.

The day now, as if glooming for the catastrophe, became overcast—the sunshine faded away, and a drift of slanting snow began to beat sharp and cold from the north-east. This discouraged the Highlanders, and raised the spirits of the English and Hessian soldiers. Charles, feeling the disadvantage of this blinding rain, made some clumsy attempts to outflank and get to windward of the duke, but he was baffled in each attempt, and the two armies returned to their first positions.

It was during these useless marches and countermarches that a poor shock-headed mountaineer resolved, with the spirit of an old Roman, to sacrifice his life for his Prince and his clan; he craftily approached the English lines, demanded quarter, and was sent to the rear. He, however, contrived to lounge through the lines, paying no regard to the rough ridicule of the soldiers. Lord Bury, son of the Duke of Albemarle, and aide-de-camp to the duke, happening just then to pass by in a richly laced dress, the crafty Highlander suddenly snatched a musket from a soldier near him, discharged it at an officer whom he mistook for the duke, and stoically bore the shot from the ranks that instantly stretched him dead.

In most battles the struggle is which shall first gain the benefit of being the assailant. In this battle the effort was which should be the last to attack, and by this unwise delay the Prince wasted all the ardour and fire of his impetuous irregular troops. The first shots were fired by the unhandy, reckless Highland artillerymen. They blazed away at a clump of horse, among whom they supposed the duke was stationed; but the shot passed high over their heads.

How many a heart far away was beating for the men of those two armies! The little, strutting, dapper, choleric king was thinking of his son; Fielding, perhaps, over his wine, was deriding the cattle-stealing Highlanders. In many an English cottage prayers were offering and tears shedding for humble Dick and Tom in the ranks. For those fierce men in the plaids, too, supplications were rising to heaven from many a grey-haired old shepherd on the mountains, many a fair-haired lassie by the loch-side, many a mother in the lonely glen.

A few minutes after one, Colonel Bedford received orders from the duke to open a cannonade on the Pretender's army, to provoke the Highlanders to advance. Major-General Husk on the left, Lord Temple on the right, and Brigadier Mordaunt in the centre, as well as Generals Bland and Hawley, who guarded the cannon at the wings, could see the "Young Italian," as they derisively called him. They discerned his womanly blue eyes, his long neck, and his blonde peruke, as he stood on an eminence. Colonel Bedford, indeed, levelling a gun, not only cut grooves and lanes through the enraged Highland ranks, but actually bespattered

the Prince with earth, and killed a man who held a led horse near him. Presently the Prince mounted and rode along the lines of the Camerons and Frasers, urging men, who did not understand a word he said, to fight bravely against the Germans and the Whigs.

They answered him with shrieks of devotion and blessings in guttural and sonorous Gaelic.

The duke, too, did his part in his own domineering way—calling on Tom of Stepney, Dick of Highgate, and Joe of Whitechapel, to stand firm, to let the Highland savages feel the bayonet, and know what sort of men they had to deal with. He then ordered Wolfe's regiment to form en potence (gibbet F-shape) at the left wing, so as to lap round the clansmen when they attacked the left division. He also ordered up two more regiments from the reserve to strengthen the second line, for there were terrible reports of those broadsword men—how they lopped off arms as if they were only carrots, and could cut a dragoon clean through to the waist at a single blow.

The duke was unwilling to attack the Prince while he had his turf walls to guard him, and the Prince was unwilling to surrender his valuable shelter. But if the duke had no heart, the Prince had no brains, for he allowed his Highlanders to be cowed by half an hour's cannonade; although ever since the victory at Preston they had treated English artillery as mere popguns, always certain to be taken by a determined rush. In everything he showed incompetency to govern other men or to govern himself. At last he sent the order to charge, but young MacLachlan, his aide-de-camp, was killed by a cannon-ball before he reached the front to convey it. Lord George Murray, in the mean time, had ordered the attack without waiting for the tardy Prince; but, even before he could pass the order round, the Macintoshes, a brave clan never before in action, galled by the fire, their hot Celtic blood unable to tamely endure the slaughter of their friends, all in a glow with rage, had tightened their belts (*scrugged*), pulled down their bonnets over their brows, flashed out their claymores, and shouting the war-cry of the clan, rushed from the centre down upon Barrel's and Munro's men. A Lowland gentleman who saw that wild charge, and looked along the Highland lines, described the almost supernatural passion which lit every face and burned in every eye. After them, swift as deer through the steel and smoke, then rushed the Athole-men, the Camerons, Stuarts, Frasers, and Macleans, with Lord George Murray chivalrously waving his sword at their head. In two minutes a torrent of steel bore down all along the line on those firm masses that had marched from Finchley.

The storm had broken at last. 'The duke's cannon on the wings mowed them with "cartouche" (grape?) shot. The front rank of Cumberland's army kept their firelocks steady at them, and swept and lashed them with fire, while Wolfe's regiment tormented them on the

flank. It was musket against sword. The Highlanders first fired their pistols, then flung themselves like wild cats among the bayonets, slashing and stabbing like madmen. The duke must have looked anxiously through the hot smoke; but when it drifted off, the long lines of white gaiters were still firm in the rear, though the front had partly gone down, the few Highlanders left giving way before the shattering fire. Only three of the Macintosh officers escaped; a few still hewed at the bayonets, and died at the very feet of the Sassenach soldiers. One sinewy fellow, Major John Mor Macgillivray, was seen a gun-shot past the enemy's cannon surrounded by grenadiers, of whom he struck down twelve before the halberds went home to his heart. The bodies of these fierce fighters were afterwards found in swathes, three and four deep.

But the charge was, unfortunately, not simultaneous. The pride of the Macdonalds was hurt by their being removed to the left wing. They had fought on the right of the Scottish army ever since Bannockburn, and they thought the change an insult and an ill omen. The true Highlander is hot as a Welshman, and proud as a North American Indian. He would rather have the battle lost than acknowledge himself unworthy of the post of honour. In vain the Young Pretender promised to take the name of Macdonald, and ever hereafter, if they fought well, to place them in the van. No. They sullenly discharged their muskets and slowly advanced, but they would not charge. They endured the English fire with sullen and sullen faces, only hewing at the heath with their broadswords. When the other clans gave way, the Macdonalds turned, too, and fled. Heart-broken at this, their colonel, the Chieftain of Keppoch, an excellent and chivalrous man, exclaimed: "My God, have the children of my tribe forsaken me?" and advanced upon the English alone, his sword in one hand, his pistol in the other. A devoted clansman following him with tears and prayers, reached him just as he was struck down by a bullet. Keppoch replied only, "Take care of yourself," then staggered forward till another bullet struck him dead.

The Young Chevalier's front line was now repulsed, but there was still a hope of the Lowland regiments; yet there was no time to head them, for Lord Ancrum's and Cobham's Dragoons were now pouring in on the flanks, through the inclosures that had been broken down by the Argyre Highlanders. Some Irish pickets kept up a spirited fire and checked the dragoons, who were sabring the unhappy Macdonalds, and one of Lord Lewis Gordon's regiments stopped another squadron to the right; but when the English infantry moved forward to charge, the Highlanders fled in spite of all the entreaties of Charles, Lord George, Lochiel, Sheridan, Ogilvie, and Glenbucket. It was a rout, and the sabres were after the brave men, hot, fast, and wrathful. Yet the English dragoons had been terribly handled. The Clan

Chattan are said to have only left fifteen men of Barrel's regiment alive. The rear of the rebels broke into two masses, one proceeding by the open road for Inverness, the other fording the water of Nairn and taking to the hills.

Charles stood stunned, confounded, and in tears. As to his conduct, Whig and Tory historians differ, as they do upon almost every other subject connected with the Scotch rebellion. The one party says O'Sullivan turned the head of his horse and dragged him away, the other that Lord Elcho entreated the Prince to rally the men and charge again, and on his refusing rode off with contempt, vowing never to see his face again.

The official account of the battle was cold, soldier-like, and matter of fact. It says of the Highlanders, that they came running on in their wild manner upon the right, where his royal highness had placed himself, imagining the greatest push would be there. They came down there several times within a hundred yards of our men, firing their pistols and brandishing their swords; but the Royals and Pulteneys hardly took their firelocks from their shoulders, so that after those faint attempts they made off, and the little squadrons on our right were sent to pursue them. General Hawley had, by the aid of our Highlanders, beat down two little stone walls, and came in upon the right flank of their second line. As their whole first line came down to attack at once, their right somewhat outflanked Barrel's regiment, which was our left, and the greatest part of the little loss we sustained was there; but Blyth's and Sempill's, giving a fire upon those who had outflanked Barrel's, soon repulsed them, and Barrel's regiment and the left of Munro's fairly beat them with their bayonets. There was scarce a soldier or officer of Barrel's, and of that part of Munro's which engaged, who did not kill one or two men each with their bayonets and spontoons. 'Tis thought the rebels lost about two thousand men upon the field and in the pursuit. We have here two hundred and twenty-two French and three hundred and twenty-six rebel prisoners. Lieutenant-Colonel Howard killed an officer, who appeared to be Lord Strathallan, by the seal and different commissions from the Pretender found in his pocket. The killed, wounded, and missing of the king's troops amount to about three hundred. The French officers will be all sent to Carlisle till his majesty's pleasure shall be known. Four of their principal ladies are in custody—namely, Lady Ogilvie, Lady Kinloch, Lady Gordon, and the laird of M'Intosh's wife.

The pursuit was cruel and bloody. For four miles along the moor the Highlanders were hewn down. Some of these luckless men died like heroes. Golic Macbane, a man six foot four high, finding himself wounded, singled out, alone, and at bay, set his back to a wall, and with his target and claymore bore the onset of half a dozen dragoons who crowded at him with their long swords. The officers cried, "Save that brave fellow;" but

the soldiers cut his head through before he fell amid thirteen of his dead enemies. The right wing crossed the Nairn with unbroken resolution. The dragoons seemed afraid to touch them in their despair. One officer, who tried to seize a straggler, was cut down with a single blow, and his slayer coolly stooping down over the body removed the gold watch.

The cruelty after the battle was increased by a rumour that the Pretender had ordered his men to give no quarter. The duke himself was cold and unrelenting. His men were ordered to go over the field and bayonet and cut down the wounded. This work was done with brutal jocularly, splashing each other with blood, till they looked (as one of them has reported) like butchers. The duke is said to have ordered Wolfe to pistol a young colonel who lay wounded; but Wolfe refused, saying he would never consent to become an executioner. Unarmed men were cut down in the very streets of Inverness. The next day the reckless duke continued his cruelties. Seventy poor wretches were dragged from under the heaps of slain, and despatched by platoon firing. Seventy-two fugitives, found in neighbouring hovels, were also butchered in cold blood. In one hut alone thirty-two blackened bodies were found amid the ashes. Nineteen wounded officers, sheltered in the court-yard of Culloden House, were also carted out and shot against the park wall. Of one hundred and fifty-seven prisoners sent by vessel to London, only forty-nine survived the cruelties of the *eight months' voyage*.

The English soldiers were seen for days strutting about in the rich laced waistcoats and hats of the Pretender and his generals. The English only lost, in this battle of forty minutes, one officer of distinction—Lord Robert Kerr, the second son of the Marquis of Lothian, a captain in Barrel's regiment. He received the first Macintosh on his spontoon, but was instantly beat down by a dozen thirsty broadswords.

The news of the important victory reached London on the 24th of April. The dapper king rejoiced, Sam Johnson secretly lamented. The Park and Tower guns soon bellowed out the news over the red multitudinous roofs, at night there were bonfires throughout London, and every steeple clashed out rejoicings. The duke received the thanks of the English parliament, and twenty-five thousand pounds a year addition to his income, and the name of The Butcher from the Scotch. As for the poor Prince, he rambled about the Western Islands for five months, skulking in shielings and shepherds' and fishermen's huts. On the 20th of September, he escaped to France in a vessel fitted out by an adherent, who had been promised a baronetcy by the old Chevalier if he could rescue his unfortunate son.

When the Master of Lovat, that enormous scoundrel, who arrived too late for Culloden, came to London to end his bad life on Tower-hill, Hogarth, remembering the march to Finchley, went out to see him at Highgate, and

he drew the subtle old rogue counting up the Jacobite clans on his picking and stealing fingers.

THE POETRY OF FACT.

PERHAPS there is nothing that more astonishes the student of modern literature than to find, on the one hand, many of those things which he had esteemed mere fictions of the fancy, to have had their origin in historical fact; and, on the other, that many others, which were and are really the products of the poetic imagination, have been in the present, and will be in the future, actualised by the ingenuity of science, or the progress of society. Even the fairies have been traced to a specific birthplace, and an actual race of dwarfish beings having a local habitation and a name. A shrewd observer has traced all the distinguishing marks by which they are described to the settlements of the Lapps. These, like what we are told of fairies, live in green mounds, pop up their heads when disturbed by people treading on their houses, steal children, are on familiar terms with the people about them when they treat them well, and punish them in return for ill-treatment. A Lapp is a little flesh-eating mortal, having control over animals, sometimes living in a tent, and sleeping out of doors, wrapped in his deer-skin shirt, but generally in a green mound, exactly answering to a fairy retreat. One sagacious traveller visited such a home on the most northern peninsula in Europe, to the east of the North Cape, close to the sea, in a sandy hollow near a burn. It was round, about twelve feet in diameter, sunk three feet in the sand, the roof being made of sticks and covered with turf, and the whole structure, at a short distance, looking exactly like a conical green mound about four feet high. There was a famous crop of grass on it, and children and dogs ran out at the door, and up to the top when the visitants approached, as ants run on an ant-hill when disturbed. Their fire was in the middle of the floor, and the pot hung over it from the roof.

A house in South Uist, in the sand-hills close to the sea, built of loose boulders, circular, and with recesses in the sides, bears corroborative testimony. It was covered when found, and full of sand, which, being removed, stone querns and combs of bone were detected mingled with ashes. Near the level of the top there was a stratum of bones and teeth of large grass-eating animals, the bones being splinted and broken, blended with ashes and shells, oysters, cockles, and periwinkles, showing clearly the original level of the ground, and proving that this was a dwelling almost the same as a Lapp "Gam" at Hopsidet.

These descriptions tally exactly with our fairy tales; and indeed our traveller's adventures read nearly as elvishly. The scene is laid at Quickjok, and on Vallespik, Swedish Lapland, and the Lapps and the deer are the

actors in it. A small man of five-and-twenty is seen from the opposite side of a river. He wears a high blue cap, yet he is so short that both he and his cap could stand upright under the arm of the observer. A party having been formed to make better acquaintance with the deer, the Lapp took from its hiding-place in a fir-tree a long birch pole, which aided him in his pursuit, and enabled him to outstrip his companions. One of these looked after him through a glass, and saw, like a brown speck on the shoulder of Vallespik, a small mortal with two dogs driving home the deer. They also visited a "cota," which was a permanent dwelling made in the shape of a sugar-loaf, with birch sticks, and long flat stones and turf; it had a door, a mere narrow slit, opening to the west, and a hole in the roof to let out the smoke. Inside was a girl of about fifteen, with very pretty eyes, sitting crouched up in a corner, and looking as scared as one of her own fawns. A priest who attended the party remarked, that if they had not been accompanied by the Lapp she would have fainted, or run away to the hills. The narrator of the adventure began to sketch her, as she sat modestly in her dark corner, and was rejoicing in the extreme stillness of his sitter, when, on looking up from some careful touch, he found that she had vanished through the doorway.

These diminutive people may have sat for the fairies of the nursery-tales, even for the Puck of the Midsummer Night's Dream. Our classical fairies—such as people Spenser's great poetic allegory—are not of this class. They are of full size, and have spiritual powers corresponding. Nor has Shakespeare painted his Oberon and Titania as minute beings; rather they have the stature and intelligence of demigods. Spenser and our dramatist contemplated them through a telescope, which perhaps more humble believers had inverted; and thus the giants and fairies were, after all, but one and the same set of beings viewed in a different manner. It is curious, that whatever magic arts giants may have mastered, they were always, like Old Nick himself in the Icelandic legends, beaten in the end by men, though they also are painted as man-eaters and owners of slaves. Some lived in caves, some had houses and cattle. Like Hercules, they fought with clubs. Are these imagined beings men or myths? In either case, they are represented as strange lubberly beings, whose dealings with men always end in their own discomfiture. Little real resemblance have the weird sisters in the tragedy of Macbeth to the three strange hags we meet with in the annals of Holinshed. They may have been intended by the legend-writer for the fates or valkyries of the northern mythology, but the historian does not say so. With our great dramatist, they are simply the exponents of Macbeth's state of mind, who had meditated the murder of Duncan before he had seen the witches. The poet uses such materials, always crude under the best of circumstances, in accordance with his theme, and, by means of

the most exquisite art, works them into harmony with it, as illustrations of psychological motives of which the original fabulist never dreamed. In such manner, they are refined and elevated, and rendered fit to become factors in a drama designed to lay bare the bases of superstitious belief; which they show both in principle and in action. Shakespeare's sisters are as superior to the witches in Holinshed, as Milton's Satan is to the Lucifer of Dante, or the Fiend of the miracle-play. Superior writers in all literatures, whether Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, English, or German, deal with their themes after the same fashion. They transmute and convert them into higher and still higher meanings, till they grow into symbols and types. Faust is such a type; so is Don Juan; so is Beatrice; so is Dido; so is Achilles; and so is Adam. They have a strange vitality, these types.

Actors and story-tellers are the preservers of the traditions that grow into types, and creators of the types themselves by the development that they give to the traditions. Some thirty or forty years ago, men in the Highlands used to congregate and tell stories; and even lately they spent whole winter nights about the fire listening to old-world tales. In every cluster of houses was some one man famed as "good at sgialachdan," whose house was a winter evening's resort. In such humble theatres, and in this simple manner, the mysterious process went on. It is now continued in a grander style at the magnificent houses where Shakespeare is occasionally acted, and the Christmas pantomime or burlesque presents a new and enlarged edition of some ancient legend, which, while retaining its name, has changed both form and substance, without apparently injuring its identity by the alterations superinduced, some of them inevitable.

In various ways, the old spirit of popular romance has survived, nor would a judicious well-wisher of his race desire it to be exorcised as an evil spirit, whatever bigoted persons may do. Rather let us accept it as a good genius to be conciliated and employed for good purposes as one of the promoters of popular education. "Surely," exclaims a lover of these traditions, "stories in which a mother's blessing, well earned, leads to success; in which the poor rise to be princes, and the weak and courageous overcome giants; in which wisdom excels brute force—surely even such frivolities are better pastime than a solitary whisky-bottle, or sleep, or grim silence; for that seems the choice of amusements if tales are forbidden, and Gaelic books are not provided for men who know no other language, and who, as men, must be amused now and then."

Better? Ay, far better! Even when the bottle is provided, amusement is expedient. If the cigar and the glass had sufficed of themselves, would speculators on the public purse have added the Music Hall and the Saloon? Music, ballet, and the acrobat have been needed to encourage people to drink; and so many are satisfied with the former without the latter, that

the average of drinking and smoking together, even on an especial occasion with a crowded audience, averages only sixpence a head. Such is the account cheerfully rendered of the Alhambra, even by the landlord himself, whom much drinking would largely benefit. Besides, these places have their history in the past, which they show signs of repeating in the present. The musical or dramatic entertainment gradually supersedes the bibulous altogether. Thus at the Grecian, once a saloon, and one of the earliest places at which music and singing were added as inducements, the theatre became a greater attraction than the platform, though dancing there was permitted as well as drinking. In like manner, the proprietor of Highbury Barn has found it his interest to provide a theatre for his customers. The little playhouse of Sadler's Wells, which has finally become so famous as the home of legitimate drama, was once a place of entertainment where gymnasts performed their feats, professionals sang, and entertainers performed, as well as the "thirsty soul" received refreshment. The fine point of the wedge was thus inserted, and in time the entire wedge obtained a place. The finer portions of such amusements gradually gain the ascendancy, and the grosser disappear. The Music Halls even now are undergoing a change. It is reported that their popularity is on the decline, and is likely to be more so, as, in order to decrease their expenses, they have ceased to give the higher class music, and have reduced the entertainment to mere comic singing. Many, therefore, propose to substitute drama, or something analogous thereto, as likely to be more attractive, or to command the attendance of larger numbers. Meanwhile, at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, tens of thousands nightly are gathered to listen to instrumental and other music, including songs. Its interior, also, has been decorated and illuminated in the most gorgeous manner, so as to entitle it to be called what it is now named on the bills, a "Fairy Palace." Nor should we be surprised if, at no distant period, some astute speculator should contrive some species of dramatic entertainment which should bring the million within the area of this immense building. Such is the necessity, in this hard-working world, for amusement, that places, like this Hall, originally intended for purposes of utility, in no long time get converted into palaces of pleasure, in which the labouring classes of all kinds may find recreation in the enjoyment of some art-invention more or less perfectly exhibited.

And as the past has realised itself in higher types in the present, and the rude tradition taken a beautiful shape in poetry, so have those poetic forms found a still higher and more startling exposition in actual society. Chaucer's imagination created a crystal palace in one of his poems, and the modern world has furnished itself with more than one such palace far exceeding his description or even conception. Science has made a poetry of its own; it flies

on the wings of the lightning, and has subdued the elements of fire and water; developing the powers of steam and gas and electricity, making each and all subservient to the advantage of man. Some people have a notion that the poetic ages have gone, and that we now live in a dull prosaic age of utility. No opinion can be more erroneous. Fulton, Arkwright, Watt, Telford, and Stephenson have been our poets, who, like Dante, have made themselves the heroes of their own poems, the actors in the biographies of their discoveries and inventions. So novel and extraordinary were their preconceptions, that, in the early part of their career, many suspected them of insanity. These things inspire hopes of the future, that the cherished ideas which many of us now entertain, but which are thought to be mere dreams by the duller-minded, will yet justify themselves by becoming facts in the coming history of the race. The electrical machine, the steam-engine, the high-level bridge, and other triumphs over matter, are so many victories which merit an *Iliad* even more than the invasion and fall of Troy. These actualities of man's productive intelligence far excel the ideals of his imagination; which, however grand they may be, fall short of their achievements. Thus, even now, the face of the social and political world is undergoing alteration while we look on as careless observers; and reforms, which wise and good men only a few years ago regarded as hopeless, are now in actual operation. Let us not, therefore, any longer err with those unenterprising men of old who thought Sir Hugh Myddelton a madman for proposing to bring the New River to London, or with the over-cautious Sir Walter Scott, who laughed at the notion of lighting our towns with gas. We will not imitate the House of Commons that ridiculed George Stephenson for his estimate of the speed at which railway trains might safely travel, or those carpers that recently doubted the possibility of a submarine cable. These wonders have been accomplished, and with them the poetic has passed into our common life.

Nor has our modern civilisation been wanting in heroism, nor will our future lack its peaceful warriors, who conquer rather with the word than with the sword. There will be, as there has been, a Sir John Franklin, a Robert Stephenson, a Brunel, a Livingstone, a Hugh Miller, and a Humboldt, who, in the onward march of time, of mind, and of morals, will, whether as martyr or victor, make the annals of the future rich in names and deeds that confer honour on our common humanity. What has happened is a promise and pledge of what will happen; but the plane of the future will occupy a higher level, and the heroic man appear yet nobler as he moves on a loftier platform. No longer regarded as a Giant, his work no longer stigmatised as the result of witchcraft, nor his success attributed to the adroitness with which he had outwitted the fiend by whom he had been taught magic, the truly great man of the future will be worshipped, at a less reverential distance, perhaps,

but with more brotherly love. The proper sympathy between classes will be promoted, by their better acquaintance with each other; and the mists of ignorance being dispelled from the popular mind, the human objects of admiration will be seen in their natural proportions, and neither the teacher nor the taught suffer from the illusions which are the inevitable consequences of a false medium. And thus the antagonism which has hitherto existed between them may happily cease.

THE MARQUIS DE FRATTEAUX.

FEW events made a greater sensation in England generally, and more particularly in London, in March, 1752, than the mysterious disappearance or abduction—it was called for a time the murder—of the unfortunate Marquis de Fratteaux, who was actually dragged by force from the heart of the English metropolis, and immured in the Bastille, to gratify the strange and unnatural hatred of his own father.

This noble, whose name was Louis Mathieu Bertin, Marquis de Fratteaux, Chevalier of the Order of St. Louis, and a distinguished young captain of French cavalry, was the eldest son of M. Jean Bertin de St. Geyran (Honorary Master of Requests and Counsellor to the Parliament of Bourdeaux) and of his wife Lucretia de St. Chamant, both of whose families were deemed, by character and descent, most honourable among the Bordelais. In the Blazon ou Art Héraldique,* Bertin is represented as bearing an escutcheon argent, charged with a saltire (simple) dentelé.

From his birth, the Marquis Louis Mathieu was an object of aversion to his father, who, on the other hand, doted even to absurdity on his youngest son, on whom he lavished all his love and his livres, and on whom he bestowed the estate of Bourdeille. M. Bertin would seem, almost, from the birth of his second boy, to have determined, by every scheme he could devise, to deprive the eldest of his birthright; and this object he followed with singular rancour nearly to the end of his life.

It has never been hinted that M. Bertin suspected the paternity of his heir. Through life the conduct of Madame Bertin was irreproachable and above all suspicion.

In the infancy and boyhood of Louis, his father strove by systematic oppression, and by cutting neglect, to degrade, mortify, and break the spirit of the poor little fellow: on all occasions giving the place of honour, and the whole of his affection, to his second son. As his manhood approached, his father proposed to him the profession of the law, but as he, weary of his unhappy home, displayed an inclination for the army, open war was at once declared by his father against him. To more than one abbé did the young man in his misery appeal for intercession with his tyrannical parent; but such appeals only made matters worse, and the Counsellor be-

* French Encyclopædie, 1789.

came so furious in his wrath, that he made preparations to seclude Louis in some strong vault or cellar of his mansion.

The Marquis having discovered the residence of a young woman who was the mistress of his father, paid her a secret visit, told her the story of his unhappy life and domestic persecution; and, as his own mother seemed powerless in the matter, on his knees sought *her* interest in his behalf. She would seem to have been touched by the appeal; and rated the Counsellor soundly for his unnatural conduct, threatening him with the loss of her affection "if M. Louis were not left to his own inclination in the choice of a profession."

In the hope, perhaps, that some English or Prussian bullet might rid him of a son whom he hated so cordially, Bertin permitted the Marquis to join the Regiment de Noailles (or 54th Cavalry of the Line, commanded by the Comte d'Ayen, nephew of Marshal Noailles) as a cadet or volunteer; but, according to the system then pursued in the French service, he could receive no pay or emolument, even while campaigning in Flanders and Germany. After fourteen months of this probation, however, he was gazetted to a cornetcy in the Regiment de Maine, and at sixteen years of age became captain of a troop in the 40th Cavalry, or Dragons of St. Jal, commanded by Brigadier the Comte de St. Jal;* his boyish spirit and bravery (not to mention his rank) having even then attracted the attention of Comte d'Argenson, who was prime minister of France from 1743 to 1757. The Count prevailed upon Louis the Fifteenth to make the Marquis a Chevalier of the Royal Order, and bestow upon him a special pension, in lieu of the wretched pittance allowed him by his father.

This early success in camp and at court seemed to inflame the resentment of the Counsellor, who now began to affirm that the Marquis was not his son; but a changeling, or impostor, substituted by the nurse for his first child, who, he declared, had died while under her charge; but, as this story could be in no way sustained, M. Bertin changed his tactics, and resolved to get rid of his eldest son by—poison!

A fever with which Fratteaux was seized about this time, favoured the infamous idea; and his father, who visited him with an air of concern, contrived to give him, in his medicine, a dose of some deadly drug which he called an infusion of bark. It nearly proved fatal, and would inevitably have done so, but for the prompt arrival of the apothecary who had furnished it, and who, suspecting foul play when summoned by the Marquis, brought with him a powerful antidote.

The Counsellor, who was immensely rich, now suborned some worthless fellows, among whom was an Italian (name unknown), to swear that Fratteaux meditated a parricidal design against

his life; "that the Marquis, having a quarrel with his father, drew his sword, and would have killed him but for the interposition of the father of the Italian, who received the thrust, and died of it."

This deposition enabled Bertin to purchase a *lettre de cachet*, by virtue of which he had his son arrested, and thrust into a monastery near Bourdeaux, where he was treated as a prisoner.

Through the great influence of Bertin as a Counsellor of Parliament, all his son's entreaties for release, or for a public trial, were rendered vain, and he lost his commission in the Regiment of St. Jal. Some of his friends, however, having discovered where he was confined, and fearing that he might be secretly put to death, broke into the monastery one night, and assisted him to escape. Through Gascony and Bearn he fled to Spain, where, without so much as a change of clothes, without money or letters of introduction, he arrived, in a famished and destitute condition, at the house of the Comte de Marcillac (a relation of his mother), who derived his title from the little town of that name, nine miles north of Bourdeaux.

The Counsellor soon discovered the place of his son's retreat, and, assisted by a liberal donation of gold, soon procured from the French ambassador at Madrid a warrant for the arrest of the fugitive, based upon the powers afforded by that infamous instrument of tyranny, the *lettre de cachet*. Once more the unhappy son had to fly; the Comte de Marcillac supplied him with money; and, embarking at the nearest port, he sailed for London, where he arrived in 1749. There, under the name of Monsieur de St. Etienne, he took a humble lodging in Paddington, then a country village with green fields all round it, from Marybone Farm to Kensington. His landlord was a market gardener.

His friends in France and Spain sent him remittances and letters of introduction to several persons of rank in London. To these, the pleasant manners, gentle bearing, and handsome person, of the young Marquis speedily recommended him, and ere long he was enabled to remove nearer town, where he boarded with a Mrs. Giles, in Marybone—or, as another account has it, "with one Mrs. Bacon, a widow gentlewoman of much good nature and understanding." But even in this "land of liberty" he was not safe from the rancour of the indefatigable Counsellor, with his *lettre de cachet*.

The English friends of the Marquis having urged that he should lay the story of his wrongs before Louis the Fifteenth in the form of a memorial, the preparation of it was confided to an amanuensis, a Frenchman named Dages de Souchard. This fellow (though only the son of an obscure lawyer at Libourne, then a very small town of Provence) assumed, in London, the title of Baron. A deep-witted, crafty, and insinuating rascal, he contrived to propitiate many unsuspecting persons, and claimed to be a strict French Protestant, though he had, in early life, been a Franciscan monk, or friar minor, in a monastery at Nerae, in the west of France, and

* Liste Historique de toutes les troupes au Service de France.

came of a family of rigid Catholics. Nay, while in the monastery, he seduced a young girl named Du Taux, whose mother was the lavandière of the establishment, and they had come together to London, where they gave themselves out as persecuted French Protestants. Having been born within twenty miles of Bourdeaux, this Souchard knew the story of the Marquis de Fratreaux, and conceived the idea of turning it to his own profit before it should reach the ears of Louis the Fifteenth. For this purpose, delaying the preparation of the memorial, he wrote secretly to the Counsellor, stating that he knew where his son was, and offering to make terms to secure and deliver him up! The Counsellor entered cordially into the scheme, and, after remitting him some money on account, agreed to settle upon him for life a pension of six hundred livres, and to pay him two thousand English guineas down, with two hundred more, for the reward of any assistants or accomplices he might deem necessary.

Dages de Souchard immediately set about his treachery, and employed a man of most unscrupulous character, one Alexander Blasdale, a Marshal's Court officer who resided in St. Martin's-lane, and whose follower, or colleague, by a strange coincidence, was the very Italian who had been accessory to the incarceration of the Marquis in the monastery near Bourdeaux.

On the night of the 27th of March, 1752, they repaired to the lodgings of the Marquis: who immediately became deadly pale on seeing the Italian, and exclaimed, in alarm and distress:

"I am a dead man!"

Blasdale summoned him to surrender in the king's name. Knowing that he owed no man anything, Fratreaux was disposed to resist. His landlady sent for M. Robart, French clergyman, to whom Blasdale, with cool effrontery, showed a writ to arrest the Marquis for a pretended debt. The latter was persuaded to yield and to accompany the officer to his house in St. Martin's-lane, whither he was immediately driven in a hackney-coach, and there placed in a secure chamber.

Five gentlemen, "one of them a person of the first fashion," on hearing of the arrest, repaired to the bailiff, and in strong language warned him to beware of using the least violence towards his prisoner, lest he should be called to a severe account; and they added, that sufficient bail would be found for him in the morning. One gentleman, named M. Dubois, remained with the Marquis as his friend, resolved to see the end of the affair, and to protect him; but about midnight the Italian came in, saying that some one wished to speak with this gentleman below. On descending to the street, Dubois found only the bailiff Blasdale, who roughly told him "to be gone," and thrusting him out of the house, shut him out, and secured the door. On this gentleman returning, with the French clergyman and others, next morning, they were told by a servant-girl

"that the Marquis was gone, in company with several gentlemen." They then demanded to see her master, but were curtly told that "he was out of town." In short, neither he nor his victim was ever beheld in England again!

Fears of foul play being immediately excited, the whole party repaired to Justice Fielding, by whom a warrant to apprehend Blasdale was issued, on suspicion of murder. Application was made to the Lord Chief Justice, and also to the secretary of state, Robert Earl of Holderness, for a habeas corpus to prevent the Marquis from being taken out of the kingdom dead or alive; but all was of no avail, and the fate of Fratreaux remained for some time a dark mystery.

It would appear that, on finding himself alone, after the rough expulsion of his friend Dubois, the Marquis became furious with rage; on which Blasdale swore that as he made so much noise in the house he would convey him at once to jail. Fratreaux, who feared he might be assassinated where he was, readily consented to go to jail, and a hackney-coach was called. In it, he, the bailiff, and the nameless Italian, drove through various obscure streets and by-lanes. It was now about five in the morning.

The marquis again and again implored aid from the coach window in broken English, but received none; to the watch his keepers said that he was "only a French fellow they had arrested for debt;" to others, they said he had been made furious by the bite of a mad dog, and they were going to dip him in salt water at Gravesend. Thus his entreaties were abortive, and at about sunrise he found himself at a lonely place by the side of the river Thames. A cocked pistol was put to his ear, and resistance was vain; he was thrust on board a small vessel, which had been waiting for him in the river, and which, after he was secured below, dropped down with the ebb tide. So well did Souchard, Blasdale, and the Italian take all their measures, that on the night of the 29th the two last-named worthies landed the Marquis at Calais, the gates of which town were opened to admit them long after the usual hour of closing. He was then delivered over as a prisoner of state to the town authorities, who had all been duly communicated with, and probably well fed, and by whom he was sent, chained by the neck, in a post-chaise, to his father's house in Paris. The Counsellor, in virtue of his *lettre de cachet*, now sent his son the Marquis to be immured in the Bastille for life.

"This is the first narrative of the kind which has stained the annals of England," says a print of the time; "and if it be not the last, highly as we boast of giving laws to all Europe, we shall be little better, in fact, than a pitiful colony exposed to the mercy of every insolent neighbour." Great indignation was excited in London, where a subscription was raised for the purpose of punishing all concerned in this flagrant violation of British law; but nothing was

achieved in the end,* though in January, 1754—one year and eight months after the outrage at St. Martin's-lane—our ambassador at the court of Versailles, General the Earl of Albermarle, demanded that both the Marquis and his infamous trepanner, Alexander Blasdale, at that time in Paris, should be delivered up and sent back to London. His request was never complied with, and for fourteen years the luckless Marquis was allowed to languish in the Bastille.

He and his story were soon forgotten, and nothing more was heard of him, until some of the London papers of July 14, 1764, contained the following paragraph: "The Marquis de Fratteaux, that French gentleman who was some years ago forcibly carried off from England to France and confined in the Bastille, is now at liberty on his estate at Fratteaux; for when his brother, M. Bertin de Bourdeille, was made Intendant of Lyons, he obtained his liberty, on giving his word of honour to remain on his estate at Fratteaux, and never to go above six miles from it without leave from his father, with whom he had been at great variance, which was the occasion of his leaving France. Two months after his arrival at Fratteaux his father went to see him, and he had permission to return the visit at Bourdeille. He has kept his word of honour strictly, and lives at present in cordiality with the whole family."

Broken in health and spirit by all he had undergone, this unfortunate victim of a family feud and an unnatural hatred, died soon afterwards, and thus the wishes of his father were accomplished.

HOWARD'S SON.

A STORY OF THREE DAYS.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER IV. THE EVE OF THE MARRIAGE.

THE next morning, the faithful Irish Andy came familiarly into the breakfast-room, with the most perfect composure, and told the company that "the masther" was not "himself at all," and that he, Andy, had thought it better to keep him in bed. He had now come for a "sup" of weak tea, and such-like. "Indeed," Andy went on, entering on a narrative, as he himself took up the teapot, "I don't know what's coming over him lately, the crature. I don't like the way he's in at all now; there's the truth, and no lie. His chist's always wrong—always, always—and I'm not pleased at all with the way he's in. And he'll see no docthors, and he has the old thing always on his mind."

They were a little alarmed at this description, which was indeed true; for, as any one might have read from Colonel Howard's face, he was

always ill, and at the moment of his arrival brought with him a heavy cold and cough which he did not care to tend or try to cure beyond the "little sup of tea" which Andy had brought up. Yet by the middle of the day he had forced himself, as he always did, to get up and go about, and said he was perfectly well.

That day was an almost feverish day. It was the day before the marriage, and a hundred things "turned up" and presented themselves after lying back expressly, as it were, and which had to be done, and done hurriedly. Yet, with Lucy, it was only one of her ordinary days; and, though working hard like her mother, she sang merrily as she worked. The village milliner, still employed only out of good nature—for her touch was a little rude and coarse—was seen in the bedroom hemmed in with prostrate dresses, which were on boxes, on beds, all about her, in helpless overthrow, like dying heroines. She was excited with the desperation and hurry of the crisis, and worked in a sort of dishabille, stripped, as it were, to give her freedom. Long after, she often dwelt on these days; for nothing like them, either in the employment or its reward, ever after occurred.

Yet neither mother nor daughter was "put out" by this flutter, nor was there need to mark them "dangerous," as is common with too many persons on such occasions. The mother and daughter sat together and talked, sometimes of the great event that was drawing near, but in truth a good deal more of the guest who had arrived last night. He was gone out, and from the windows they had seen him holding his "little man's" hand as they both walked off together round the lake on the promised expedition to the doctor's observatory.

That day passed by too quickly. But towards evening all had been done that was to be done. They had been down to Mr. Trail's church—a charming little village church—rather new, its tower and spire being tiled over with warm genial tiling, made out of the clay of the place. The genteel people of the place were for the best Welsh slates, but the vicar and his architect felt that there was fitness in this local covering. The village people had worked very hard and decorated the inside very prettily. Colonel Howard was nearly all the day away at the doctor's house, looking at the instruments, in which his boy found such a fascination. They came home towards four, and as they walked up the avenue, the boy's hand still in his, and he in a sort of reverie, they saw a chaise at the door with a portmanteau on it. This awakened him, and he stopped a moment. "More company," he was thinking; "this was not the place for me to come to."

In the hall he met Lucy in all her impetuosity and flutter. She started when she saw him.

"Come with me, Cousin Howard," she said, hastily taking his arm. "Won't you? I want to show you something."

"My dear Lucy," said he, fondly, "do not

* "We are told that a foreign nobleman is already in custody of a messenger for this offence, and no person is permitted to have access to him, neither is he allowed the use of pen, ink, or paper."—Gentleman's Magazine, 1752. Very probably this "foreign nobleman" was the *Baron Dages de Souchard*.

ask me. I cannot go through more of this. Seeing these new faces always distresses me and makes me miserable. I am a wretched oddity, but you know——"

"It is not that, dear cousin," she said, in great excitement. "There's no new face. Come to my room. I want to talk. Yes," she added, suddenly, "to show you all my stores. Come, do."

"But, Fred," he said, absently, "we must find Andy somewhere."

Andy was found, and the colonel went with her. She was strangely excited, and as she showed all her presents, seemed to be doing this as an excuse for approaching some subject, talking very rapidly all the time. He looked and admired in a sort of abstracted way. She then said:

"Oh, but the horse, too, you must see *that*. I have not shown you half."

Howard seemed to be awaking gradually. "But what is this? and I have contributed nothing! Goodness, what a being I am! I think of nothing. I don't know how to do anything like other people. You must let me make up for all this stupidity. Tell me quick what you would like."

"Dearest cousin," she said, colouring, "how kind you are."

"But you must promise me," he said, more earnestly; "I don't understand these things. I am quite helpless—a bracelet, a necklace—you must tell me, and fix on something."

In her eyes was twinkling a sense of some eager and secret plan. "There is a present you *could* give me, dearest cousin, which would make me—and make us all *so* supremely happy; but I know that you could not give it to me, and that I have no right to ask it of you."

"What is it?" he asked, eagerly. "I am so glad to hear this. Let it be as great as you like. Don't be afraid."

"If I thought you cared for me enough," she said, hanging down her head sadly. "But I have no right to expect that, and you would think me forward, and——"

"But what can you mean, my dear child," he said, wondering, and with a troubled air. "You know that I like you, and it would make me, oh! so happy, to be allowed to make you happier even in that trifling way; for since I have come into this house, I seem to have come into a kind of peace that I have not known before, for from your eyes the old light seems to come, and I seem to be in a presence that I have long missed. And *you* think I could refuse you, when I seem to hear that voice, and to see those features?"

With an impetuous motion she put her arm in his, and, with glowing cheeks and flashing eye, began to pour out an eager whispering—a perfect tide. Before she had done, he had drawn himself away with a start—drawn himself further and further away. He set himself free, and covered his face with his hands.

"This is not right, cousin. Impossible! I did not expect this from you!"

"Forgive me, you make me wretched. But you promised all—you know you did—and I told you you would be angry;" and she glided down before him on to her knees.

He had walked away a little, then turned hastily, and saw her kneeling before him. "Dear child, you know not what you ask me. How can I—how *dare* I do it? He hates me and hates my boy." He was growing more and more agitated every moment. "You do not know the whole. You cannot understand. *Anything* but that—no! no! no!"

She rose slowly, and turned away impetuously.

"This was to be a happy day for me," she said, tossing her head. "They all told me so. You are determined I shall be wretched. Where is your promise *now*? Do you suppose I care for your presents, and bracelets, and such things? You have made me feel, Cousin Howard, a mortification that no one else has done—no one else! Every one else has been good to me."

She walked away flushed and indignant. He stood a moment irresolute, then in a faint voice called her. "Lucy, come back. I did not mean to be unkind. But if you were to know how I have suffered—what I suffer. But it may have been all wrong, and I promise you now I will try in future to think less uncharitably of one who has so deeply injured—not me, but——"

"Who!" said she, running to him and covering his hand with kisses. "There is a good, kind, dear cousin. But *that* is not enough—that is a very trifling marriage present for me. Try? You must give me more than that. Should you see him or meet him, you will promise me to write—to speak—to forgive—to hear him—tell him that you have misjudged him a little—that he has done nothing to——"

"I can *never* do that," he said, passionately. Then, suddenly checking himself, "Well, if it pleases you, I do promise. It will not be for long, and there is folly in all this. Some day—if he writes—I may——"

"This is a promise," she said, panting with eagerness; "a solemn one, mind; for I shall be away, and you will not see me again for long, and I have nothing to trust to but your honour and promise."

"Then you have it, dear cousin."

"The first time you see him?"

"Yes."

In a second she had flown away from him, and with a cry of delight called out:

"Edward! Edward!"

CHAPTER V. RECONCILIATION.

A YOUNG man, with fair hair and a fine open face, came hurrying from some room, then stopped irresolutely. Under the lamps stood Colonel Howard, half turned away, and as his brother drew near, with his hand half raised. In a moment the eager girl had seized that gentle hand in both hers, and drawn it softly towards another that was half extended.

"You promised, you know," she whispered. It was no use resisting, and the colonel turned

a look upon his brother, which the other understood in a moment.

It was all over—the enmity of years was gone. In half an hour the younger brother was with Mrs. Winter and her daughter, pouring out his soul in a torrent of delight and gratitude.

"You have taken a load from my heart, my dear child," he said. "You are an angel, and I shall never forget it. I am so happy."

"Not more than I am, Cousin Edward," she said; "and do you know why? Some one gave me to-night the finest present I have got as yet—finer even than Mr. Blenkinsop's beautiful horse."

"I am so glad to hear it," he said, "and I hope there will be many more. I shall look out for one to exceed that."

"Don't you see, Edward," said Mrs. Winter, smiling, "what she means?"

"Ah! now I do. But she shall not lose her present for that. I am so happy. You have done for me what I have been trying to do for years. It was no use; and though I pleaded hard, and showed him that I had really done nothing, or very little to deserve his resentment, and was heartily penitent for that; but my letters were all returned to me and never opened. But he had this idea, that I hated him and his family, after what he had done. But he is so noble, so generous—he has behaved so nobly; and from this moment I must only strive to find some way to show him how I love and honour him."

"Where is he?" said Mrs. Winter, rising. "I must run. What a happy night we shall have of it."

But they found he was not so well—not well enough, he said, to come down and join them at dinner. "It is great folly, I know, but I can hardly help it. In the evening I will try. Poor Edward, I have done him sad injustice. Will you say it to him again? You recollect what I said to you and to Lucy—that he hates me and my boy. It was a shocking slander. I thought so, but I had no reason to think so. Must atone for all this," he added, wearily. "Give my love and affection to the pretty bride, and tell her I am only nursing myself for the morning."

It was indeed a happy morning. Lucy was in a chronic impetuosity, stopping short suddenly at intervals to call out, "I am so happy!" And she told Captain Hallam pleasantly and very plainly, that he need not take this access of spirits to *his* account; that it was for a totally different matter, and for the sake of her dear cousin, the colonel, whom she loved; a declaration the captain received without the least signs of disturbance or jealousy.

They all knew Edward Howard, and had known him for long; yet they had never seen *him* in such buoyant humour. He was one of those frank, open spirits, so welcome and so useful to girls—with whom they do not fall in love, but whom they like—for these brave honest fellows are always doing them some kind and friendly office, never easy unless employed, and

often despatched up to town or down to country on half a day's journey. He was ready to find a horse, trained for a lady, on a moment's notice, and do a hundred other "good-natured" things. Yet he was not "soft."

This scene, reposing as it seemed, basking as it were in a softened mellow light, was often to be looked back to; that gay drawing-room, full of beaming and happy faces. They had little games, that almost verged on romping, at least where the "little man" was concerned, who was screaming and crowing with delight, hiding behind cushions and sofas, and burying his little face in ladies' skirts. He told his day's adventures again and again, and spoke with rapture of those *wonderful* instruments, the screwing and mechanical arrangements of which had penetrated him with delight and admiration. He had never seen such a world of apparatus, and the doctor this very night, taking him by the shoulders, had sworn he should go over to-morrow and assist at certain unscrewings and oilings which were to take place. He sang them various songs, and, on a general demand, stood up in the middle and again gave "*MULLIGAN'S WEDDIN'*," with entire approbation. It was noticed that, whenever he mentioned the name of that Irish bridegroom, his little eye wandered roguishly to the captain, who affected to be overcome with bashfulness at such public notice. Occasionally he assumed a grave face of responsibility, and stole away to have a private interview with his papa, coming back with a little air of decent solemnity, saying, "I do not like the way papa is in." But he soon freshened up into gaiety again, until eleven o'clock came, and with it Andy's curious face appeared at the door, with his unconcerned, "Now, Master Friddy, it's time for you."

CHAPTER VI. THE WEDDING.

HERE was now the morning of the wedding, as sunny a morning as "though it were bespoken, Glory be to God," to use Andy's remark and blessing. How bright the day was, and how bright and gay looked the deep red and green of the little place. Inside there was flutter, but delightful flutter—kissing, smiles, tears, and kissing again.

Colonel Howard is down betimes, but every one notices his face, and sees at once that he should be in his room. There is a great change in his looks within these two days, but he said he was well. But Andy, who had a sort of festive air himself, was heard to say, "he hoped it would be all right *to-morrow next day*"—a mis-giving which was to be realised presently. Yet, with a generous foresight, the colonel had not lost time; and on the night before a messenger had been sent up to town, with a letter to the chief jeweller, and who returned betimes with a superb casket. As Lucy came to him, about eleven, in her bridal dress, all lace and white silk and white flowers, he put this into her hand. "This," he said, "is but a poor token of what I feel to you, and for what you did last night."

It is a miserable present, but I have no time, and no judgment."

"It is superb," said she, taking out the jewels, which were magnificent, "and I am so happy!"

Captain Hallam was come for her. The carriages were waiting.

The little church was charming. The flowers seemed to have bloomed from the night before. They clustered over the pillars. The villagers filled the aisles. The young girls looked wistfully on, thinking, as every young girl does, of another picture where *they* would be the chief figure. Of all the pageants in life's many pageants and shows, this, perhaps, is the most interesting. The greatest churl among the spectators feels that this is not a mere scene in a play. Long after, when the last act has nearly begun, the "actress" looks back to that morning, and sees herself through a soft cloud on that morning, and thinks herself another being. Oh, how young! how pretty! how fresh! And how bright and fairy-like everything all round. It seems as far off as last year, and she turns (by instinct) to look into that glass over the chimney-piece!

Mr. Winter was the celebrant of the office, and was "assisted" by a good-humoured clergyman, the Rev. John Hallam, brother, as we may suppose, to the captain. The friends drew in close as the clergymen began their combined labours. Even at that moment the quick eyes of Lucy, darting about, saw that Colonel Howard was not there, though the little bright face of his son was to be seen, studying, with an absorbing interest, some mechanical arrangements on the stair of the pulpit. Andy, too, could be seen afar off, towards "lookin' in" at the business with a dry, serious, and inquiring look. He had just "run down from the mather."

It was done now. The combined efforts of the two clergymen had succeeded, and Lucy and her lover, *Captain and Mrs. Hallam*, were walking away in a sort of reverential bearing. There was signing in the vestry, congratulations, kisses so fervent, whispered "darlings!" "my pets." Then a coming out and taking off hats, and driving away. Then there was the house again, Arbour Hill; and Lucy, bounding from the carriage, fluttered straight to Colonel Howard's room.

He was on the sofa, and languid and pale. After he had wished her all blessings and happiness, "My dear child, my dear *Lucy Hallam*,"—he said this very tenderly—"when it came to the last moment, then I found I had not strength, though I tried very hard. My little man will be here, I suppose, presently."

Then they all came home with a sort of dropping fire. Our doctor, who had hoped to be there, was kept away by professional duty, which came most awkwardly. Then the breakfast set in.

That, too, was of a very cheerful and festive pattern. Such things in the country have a tone of their own quite unique. That, too, is a picture to be looked back on in those coming

days when we shall be looking into the drawing-room mirror, waiting for our married son and his children to come to dinner on, say, a Christmas. The affectionate voices, the fervent wishes, the *genuine* speeches, so different from other speeches over wine—these come back like the chime of the Christmas bells we have heard overnight.

There was a health or two, and a speech, kindly but hurried; for time was pressing, and a train was to be watched for. Edward Howard did this duty in a pleasant buoyant fashion, which kept away the faint clouds of gloom that were seen gathering. His fair handsome face grew bright and animated as he spoke. He told of the bride's virtues, of the love they all bore to her, of her smile that lit up that house and delighted all who came within its charm—her cheerful spirit, which made all happy. There was the loss—but there was gain for another, who had secured a prize. Then there was another, who was not with them at *that* moment, but whose heart was with them, and who had tried to be of their company. He knew him, and never so well, added Edward Howard, with a sudden hoarseness in his throat, as within a day or two—he never knew what were his virtues and his affection. However, it was not too late then.

During this speech the servants had gathered at the door, and were listening. Round the table were handkerchiefs very busy. The "little man" had listened with an air of deep attention, "taking it all in;" he was very happy, too, and had been supplied with wedding-cake under tolerably small restraint. Yet he was a little gentleman, and had trained himself not to indulge in excesses which he found but too common among his contemporaries. When Edward had finished speaking of Colonel Howard, the little man softly stole from the room—not as some unfairly suspected, because of the richness of the cake—but to pay a visit to his father. In a very few moments he came back, with a strange look of mystery and importance on his little face, got beside Lucy and her husband, and whispered eagerly:

"Papa is so much obliged for your kind reception of his name—those were his words—and wishes he was here himself to thank you all."

"Why not tell these ladies and gentlemen, my boy?" said the captain. "Would you be afraid?"

"Afraid, no; papa gave the message."

In a moment there was a silence, and with his face modestly bent upon the tablecloth, the little man repeated the same words, and gave them his papa's message.

"Ah, listen to the darling!" was said among the maids at the door; "listen to him now."

"Shure he's wiser," said Andy, almost contemptuously at *their* surprise, "than a grown Christian!"

But the hour had now come. There was a general rising up—a rushing away for some last preparation—and more tears and embracing. The

carriage was there, and they were all out on the steps. There is the last embracing and last good wishes; and Lucy, in sober travelling dress, yet magnificent, stoops down and lifts her veil to kiss the little man, who has put up his face. Now they drive away, and the "old shoe," searched for and found with difficulty, flies into the air after them. A cluster of faces, half sorrowful, half pleased, look long after them.

Then came the lull—the sudden prostration which sets in after all such excitement. That day becomes of a sudden purposeless—a day for weary and vacant wandering, when no one can settle himself to anything. It was felt, too, that the light of that house had gone out, and that there was a change.

Colonel Howard, however, was not mending, and they were beginning to be in serious concern about his state. And about four o'clock Edward said he would go over to the doctor's house, not two miles away round by the lake, and see if he had returned. The doctor knew of some greater doctor whom he had to meet not far away that very day, and who might be readily secured also. It was determined not to say a word of this little plot to Colonel Howard, who would raise difficulties, and protest he was getting well.

The little man soon heard of this proposal, and saw in it at once a plan for advancing his own little interest and pleasure.

"Oh, then, I can go too," he said, "and see all the telescopes again. I was *promised*, you know."

"The very thing," said Edward; "we shall make an expedition together. But mind, now, not a word to papa. We are going for a great doctor, and if he hears it he will not see one, and perhaps he will never get well."

"Never get well," repeated the little man, anxiously.

"I mean," said Edward Howard, "if he does not see the doctor; none of us *can* be well unless we see doctors."

He had still some misgivings. "But," said he, wisely, "it is all for papa's good; and I *am* dying to see those telescopes again. Whisper, I'll not tell papa a word."

Andy appeared suddenly. "Where are you taking him to, Misther Edward? Have you spoke with the masther about it?"

"Oh, all right, Andy, and quite right of you. But I'll make it all square. We are going for a doctor, and not a word is to be said to *him*, you understand."

Andy shook his head.

"Masther Friddy, you'd better go in and tell the masther *yoursel*. That's the raysonable way."

"Now, Andy," said the young man, seriously, "you mustn't interfere here; we want to get a doctor. You don't understand these things. And you know very well how hard it is to get my brother to take care of himself."

"Oh, so be it; so be it," said Andy, coolly. "Only," he added, muttering, "wait until to-morrow next day."

"So we can, Andy, and till the day after too," said the young man, laughing.

The little man laughed too. "Oh, Andy," he said, "how funny. But *I think*, Andy, you don't *quite* understand."

The young man went to his room to get a coat and write a letter for the post. The little man was wrapped up in his coat, and ready for the road in a moment. He waited a little impatiently in the hall a few moments, and then went out through the garden round by the back of the house. Howard had a longer letter to write than he fancied, and took a longer time over it, and then came out hastily. He found the little fellow gone.

"The impatient little rascal," he said. "He is busy with some tricks in the garden." But he was not in the garden. Then Howard hurried across the field, and was greatly relieved by hearing the voice of the little man calling to him cheerfully in a sort of chirrup of delight. He was playing "hide and go seek;" was up in a tree?

By one of those curious coincidences which are almost unaccountable, Colonel Howard, almost as soon as they had gone, thought of his little son, and rang his bell for Andy. The little secret about the doctor was now sure to come out. "Sorra o' me knows where he is, colonel. He said he was to go with the brother over to the docther man."

"Go with Edward!" repeated the colonel, starting up suddenly. "How dare you trust him out of your sight? Did I not depend on you?"

"Sorra a one o' me could help it," said Andy. "Sure I thought Misther Edward was *now* next to yourself."

"To be sure, to be sure," said his master, colouring and letting himself fall back on the sofa. "You did quite right, Andy. The poor child can't be shut up altogether. But when will they be back, Andy?"

"Oh, be raysonable yourself now," said the other, coolly; "you know they are only gone now."

"Oh, to be sure. But mind, Andy, the moment they come in send him to me."

Edward went hastily towards the lake, from whence the voice seemed to come.

"What folly of me," he said, "to let him go. Troublesome child!"

In a moment he caught sight of the "troublesome child," standing in a little punt which was drawn up close to the shore. He was in a tumult of delight, and clapping his hands eagerly, from sheer spirits.

"I found this," he cried. "Only think! We must go in this; it will be much shorter."

The bank overhung the river, and was very steep.

"Take care, take care!" cried Howard, in an agony of terror. "How did you get there? Stay where you are till I come down."

"We must go in the boat, mustn't we?" said the little fellow, standing in the bows with one of the small oars in his hands. "We will

bring the doctor over in it to papa, and lose no time."

"What folly of me!" said Howard to himself, hurrying down the little side path which wound down to the water. The water was concealed from it by some furze bushes. He long after recollected that picture of the fine little fellow standing at the bow of the boat, flourishing the light oar. Long after, also, he recollected the wild start he got when he reached the edge and saw that the boat seemed to be empty, and was moving slowly away from the shore. He could not reach it; he was quite helpless, and the little boy had not strength to manage it. "What folly all this hiding at the bottom of the boat!" for so he thought he was.

He called out to him frantically, "Come back. Give up nonsense, pray, dear child, for your dear father's sake. We shall not be able to get the boat back without all sorts of trouble."

He paused, but there was no answer.

He called again. The boat was gliding further away; and then a sudden chill struck to his heart. He was near fainting with the bare idea. He climbed up the bank, not by the path, struggling up with his hands and feet, and then he saw that the boat was empty, with a solemn emptiness that made his heart shrink. The sight of his eyes seemed to leave him. Down below him the water was black, and dark, and deep, and weedy; and though he could not swim, his impulse was to fling himself down, cast himself in at all risks, and, if he could not save, hide himself from the world for ever. But a happier glimpse of reason came to him, and gasping, and staggering, he climbed up the bank yet higher on to the road, and, shouting, made for the house. There was a figure actually coming down towards him, sent, as it seemed, by Heaven. "Oh, Andy, Andy!" he shrieked. He could do no more, and pointed back. The faithful retainer understood enough (he had been "rared" on the Donegal coast). He was past Howard in a second, and in another was at the water's edge. A little cap was floating there, and told him the story and the spot. The boat was drifting far out, and seemed a figure of all chance and hope drifting away also. With a "Holy Mother!" on his lips, Andy had gone in head-foremost among the weeds. He had once made one in a life-boat crew on that Donegal coast. He was sure to succeed in what he had tried, and he dived, and searched, and explored, and at last came upon the little helpless figure, bound up tightly in a mass of cruel weeds. Andy had now hard work to set him free. But he did so at last. But one so young and tender as the child was, and now so many minutes under the water—there he was now, on the bank, limp, saturated, and his soft hair covering his face; and as for life—

Andy had him in his arms in a moment. Not knowing what he was doing, Edward put out his hands to help; but Andy shook him off with a "Stand back!"

"What shall I do?" said Edward, wildly. "Will he live? Have I killed him? Tell me. Tell me something to do."

Andy was struggling up the bank with supernatural strength. "There, run, run round for the doctor for the bare life, if you care for *his* life at all."

In the kitchen, before the great fire, was a strange and terrified group round their insensible figure. No one knew what—hot water—and hot things were the only resource until the doctor, whom God send quickly, should arrive. But up-stairs the quick ear of the father had heard the rustling and rushing; and the half cry and half whisper. A yet quicker instinct made him associate this disorder with something connected with his child. Weak as he was, he had risen and come out into the hall. He heard the quick voices—the confusion below—and rather staggered than walked to the top of the stairs. At the same moment, he met Mrs. Winter; her pale face and despair told him everything.

"Where is he?" he said, in a trembling voice. "What is all this?"

"Oh, come, come!" said she, bursting into tears. "You must prepare yourself—the poor, poor darling—the boat—"

He could not answer her, but stood looking at her with a fixed stony air, swaying from side to side as if about to fall.

"No, no; you must not—not that way!" And she caught him in her arms, and tried to stop him. But he put her aside, almost roughly, and went down.

The wretched Edward was the first that met him, who shrunk away as though he wished the earth to cover him. Then the miserable father put aside the group that was humanely striving to hide what was lying there from him, and fell forward on the floor beside the helpless body of his "little man."

CHAPTER VII. AFTER THE WEDDING.

BUT the faithful Andy had great "sinse," as he called it, and good practical skill for the common emergencies on that Donegal coast. "Many and many's the time" a poor fisherman had been carried ashore in that poor way, and they had got him round. And here now, as he was working himself and making them all work, rubbing, fomenting and warming, the sounds of wheels came most gratefully to their ears, and made Andy break out into a hearty "Glory be to God for all his mercies!" In another moment the doctor was stamping down the stairs, swiftly as if on life or death; and "Glory be to God," as Andy would again say, another doctor was following. They seemed to know what they had come for, though there was no one up-stairs to tell them, and no messenger could have reached them.

"Clear away, clear away," said the doctors. "Done very well so far—work on, my lads—and you women, have plenty of everything warm." They then examined the little figure before

them, listened to its chest, warmed and fomented, worked hard with the bellows, until suddenly the doctor leaped up and said, "Thank God, we are in time after all."

But the unhappy father, removed from that place up-stairs, had come to himself. His grief had taken a new shape—of vengeance. "I knew it! God's justice may overtake him. The villain plotted it. God punish him for it! He came here for it. And you brought us to this wretched house for the same thing. But I shall live to be revenged. I told you so. The vile black villain! He murdered my poor wife, and now comes to destroy my poor, poor child. Let him come and kill me—now—no, but he shan't; I shall live, live to destroy him, if only for that. Where is he? where is he? Let me find him!"

It was hard to restrain him. Was there ever such a change as from that house in the morning, to the present scene! Then he forced himself from those who were trying to keep him. But, as he was tottering down, met the doctor.

"Good news, friend," he said. "I knew we'd do, if we only worked on hard enough. Now, no flutterings and agitation. Think, you are a man, and show an example to the ladies."

Colonel Howard's eyes moved slowly upwards in deep and devout thankfulness.

"Come down with me," said the doctor; "you may now. The poor boy is beginning to move and stir. The warmth is coming into him, but you may be sure all danger is gone."

"God is too good to me," said the colonel, hurrying after him.

There was a perfect tumult in the kitchen, for as they entered, the faithful Andy was leaving it, carrying the child in his arms. The child's head hung over drooping, but his eyes were opening languidly. Through the haze it saw a figure it knew, and a faint tiny voice called out, "Papa, papa!"

* * * * *

That evening, when the little fellow was in bed, warm, glowing with prescribed stimulants, half dozing and half waking, but now happily leagues away from the fatal region of eternal sleep, and people in the house had time to think of others, there were some who recalled a shrinking cowering figure that was now outside the house, now flitting on the stairs from a presence it dared not meet. The doctor was saying comfortably, as he drew on his gloves, "Now I may go, and beyond a look in to-morrow morning, you won't want me again." Who noticed this phantom? "Where's our friend," he said, "his brother—what is he about?"

Colonel Howard took Mrs. Winter's hand. "Not now," he said; "you will see him, for I cannot. Perhaps we do him injustice. But still it is better for all. I shall try to forgive—if possible, forget. Thank the Almighty Lord

for all, who so interposed and saved both me and him, and did not leave an old broken man to misery and despair for the last few days of his life."

"Well," said the doctor, "a man can do no more than he can do; and if, as he says, he could not swim a stroke, why, it was hard to expect him——"

Colonel Howard shook his head fiercely.

"Yes, indeed, though I could see that he did all that he could. Went in half up to his middle."

"You could see," said Colonel Howard, dreamily. "Why, were you——"

"To be sure. I saw the whole business from beginning to end. The little urchin coming down by himself, climbing into the boat. Saw it all through my good Dolland glass, and I declare I never suffered so much, for I knew what would happen, and it seemed only a few yards off. Capital glass——"

"And Edward?" said Colonel Howard, hurriedly. "When did he—where was he——"

"The Dolland showed me him too as plain as my hand, rushing down and calling to the fine little rascal who was getting into the boat——"

"Where is—where is he?" said the colonel, distractedly. "What have I done!"

The doctor was a little astonished, but he did not know what was passing in his friend's mind, who hurried past him. Down in the hall was the unhappy Edward, who stood sorrowfully as his brother approached him.

"My brother, my dear brother," said the colonel, "I have wronged you, oh so outrageously, so cruelly. I have heard all and know all now, and could humble myself on this very ground to beg your forgiveness."

The night of that wedding-day thus became a night almost of bliss, very unusual on such solemnities. The little man was soon asleep, and awoke again fresh and restored, and, in defiance of his faithful henchman's warning, insisted on getting up and going down to the drawing-room, then lit up, over which a bright tranquil cloud was floating. He strode with his little limbs into the room. "Here I am, papa;" and then, after standing looking at their surprise, gave a crow, and ran to hide his face on his father's knee.

Not many such nights were to follow, and on that sweet and charming little circle the curtain came down slowly. That little episode altogether, of the marriage, was pleasant to think on, and it came back to many hereafter, when the gentle colonel, broken with many shocks and trials, had at last found repose in a little quiet corner under a spreading tree.

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BOOK V.

CHAPTER VII. VISITORS AT DE MONTFORT VILLAS.

AFTER the disagreeable business in which Walter Charlewood had been involved at the bank, Clement insisted that his brother should return and share the family home. It was in vain that Wat rebelled and implored; there was no resisting Clement's strong steady will. "It must be so, Watty," he said. "Trouble and danger have come from your leaving us. Worse shall not follow if I can by any means prevent it. Mother and Penny will receive you gladly. The quiet peaceful home life will, after a while, be much sweeter to you than——"

"Oh, home-life!" answered Walter, bitterly. "I don't care to go back to a home where I'm looked upon as a monster—a foil to your virtue—neither have I any fancy for playing prodigal son, and being cried over by the women." Then, with a sudden change of tone, he whined out like a chidden schoolboy, "I say, Clem, *don't* make me go back there, old fellow! I'll be as steady as a rock, and I won't forget what you have done for me, and I will keep all square and right; indeed I will! But—but—it's so *beastly* dull at Barnsbury!"

It was all in vain. His rent (discovered to be in arrear) was paid at the dingy lodging-house, and himself and his portmanteau were conveyed in a cab to his mother's home. Mrs. Charlewood was so overjoyed to see her boy once more under her roof, that it is to be feared she was scarcely as much shocked as she ought to have been at the immediate cause of his being there. Clement did not needlessly distress her; but of course it had been impossible entirely to avoid imputing blame to his brother in the matter, nor would he have deemed it right or wise to do so had it been possible. But not even to his sister Penny did he impart all he knew of the extent of Walter's misconduct. Whatever that was, it remained a secret between the two brothers.

For a time, things went on quietly. Walter was cowed by a sense of disgrace. Although Penelope, at Clement's earnest request, refrained from uttering any reproaches to her

youngest brother, the very fact of her unwonted silence and forbearance stung him. He was conscience stricken, and interpreted every word and look as a stab aimed at himself. The little household was peaceful, but sad. Walter's presence amongst them had a depressing influence. There was no longer that candour and confidence in their home-talk which lightens all burdens. Clement usually returned from his office early, but there were occasions when he was detained later. Walter had demanded a key with which to let himself into the house whenever he would; but this his brother had rigidly refused to allow him. Walter made a hard struggle for this privilege, but suddenly ceased to ask for it, and took the habit of going to bed early, as early sometimes as half-past eight or nine o'clock. He professed that the dulness and stupidity of his home-life made him sleepy, and wished he were dead outright rather than buried alive. "But, Wat," Penelope would say, "you are always in such violent extremes. Why can you not go out occasionally and amuse yourself, and return home at a reasonable hour? I would always sit up for you until eleven. I, too, think it is not good for you to be altogether buried alive. But why need you be? It is your own fault."

To such speeches Walter would reply that he was not a child, although Clem, having got the upper hand, tried to treat him like one, and that if he could not come in and go out without being spied upon and lectured, he would stop at home for good and all, and he hoped Clem would like that!

Mrs. Charlewood was singularly silent during these discussions; and whenever Penelope spoke to her privately on the subject, would say nervously, "There, love, don't talk about it; let us be thankful that we have got the lad at 'ome again. I know, dear, Clem is very good and wise; but—*isn't* he a bit stern with Wat now and then? Well, there; I dare say I'm all wrong. Don't scold me, Penny; don't, my dear! All I want is to keep peace and good will among you all."

One morning at breakfast Clement said to his mother, "Our little servant has one most singular propensity—she is not generally apt to originate any service, or to do anything in the way of work that she can leave undone; but she keeps the lock of the street door oiled and cleaned in the most wonderful way—the hinges

too. When we first came here the door creaked terribly; now I enter positively without noise. I wonder what put it into her head to do this!"

"Why, Clem!" cried Penelope, "Ann wouldn't think of such a thing, I am very sure. Whoever oils the lock, it is not she; besides, the only oil we have in the house is salad oil, and that I keep locked up in the kitchen cupboard."

There was a momentary silence. Then Mrs. Charlewood said, tremulously: "It is not Ann that oils the lock, dear. It's—it's me."

"You, mother? What on earth for?"

"I—I found it fidgeted me so to have it creaking and grating. I've nervous fancies now, you know, that I didn't 'ave once upon a time; so I just keep it well oiled with a feather, and—and—I didn't want to bother anybody about it."

"Well, you have been uncommonly sly in your proceedings, mamma," said Penelope. "I have never once chanced to see you near the lock."

Mrs. Charlewood appeared so confused, and unwilling to pursue the subject, that Clement signed to his sister to say no more. The matter was thus allowed to pass off for the time, but Penny referred to it afterwards in speaking to Clement.

"It was odd of mamma, was it not, Clem? I have noticed several rather strange fancies she has taken lately, and a kind of secret way that used not to be usual with her at all."

"Her nervous system has been greatly shattered," said Clement. "We must be gentle and tranquil with her."

Miss O'Brien's visit had been a surprise and a break in the Charlewood's monotonous life. She brought the latest news of Augusta and her husband. Mr. and Mrs. Malachi Dawson had arrived in England, and were travelling to town by easy stages, paying one or two visits en route. The elder Mrs. Dawson occupied for the season a small dark stuffy house in a cul-de-sac in Mayfair; and there her son and daughter-in-law were to remain during their brief stay in London before going down to take possession of their own home near East-field.

"Augusta told me to say that she should certainly come and see you," said Miss O'Brien, blushing in delivering the message as Augusta had *not* blushed in giving it.

"Augusta 'as not written to me for a long time," said Mrs. Charlewood, gently.

"She says that she—that you—that her last letter was never answered."

Penelope checked Mrs. Charlewood in a reply, and said slowly, "I hope Augusta *will* come to see her mother. Her mother will be glad to see Augusta."

About a fortnight afterwards, a hackney cab drew up before Number Nine De Montfort Villas. It had stopped at several doors before, and the driver only succeeded in finding the right house by the zealous assistance of a

chemist's boy with a basket on his arm, who, having been sent on a pressing errand in a precisely opposite direction, eagerly embraced the opportunity afforded by the cabman's inquiries to accompany the vehicle to De Montfort Villas.

From the cab alighted a lady in rich mourning robes, with a thick black veil covering her face. She was followed by a ruddy-faced broad-shouldered man in clerical costume, and lastly came forth another lady dressed in a pale lilac muslin of the lightest fabric and most delicate colour, and wearing a close straw bonnet trimmed with white ribbons. The lady in mourning rang the bell, and after a word or two with the little servant, the whole party was admitted into the house, and ushered into the small back parlour. "Missis would be down directly," the servant said, "and so would Miss Charlewood."

The lady in mourning raised her veil, revealing the handsome face of the late Miss Augusta Charlewood. "Good gracious!" she exclaimed, fanning herself with her handkerchief, "how frightfully hot I am. That veil has nearly suffocated me." As she was speaking, the door opened, and Mrs. Charlewood and Penelope came into the room.

"Oh, Gussy! Oh, my child!" cried the former, taking her daughter in her arms. Penelope gave her sister her hand, and bent forward as though to kiss her, but Mrs. Malachi Dawson offering her cheek, Penelope omitted the salute altogether.

"And do you see who I have brought with me?" said Augusta.

Mrs. Charlewood turned round, and wiped the tears from her eyes before she recognised her visitors. "Why, goodness me!" she exclaimed. "Mr. Fluke, and Miss Fluke! Well, this is a surprise. 'Ow d'ye do?"

The Reverend Decimus Fluke shook hands with the widow. He was not an unkindly man, and he put a good deal of friendly cordiality into the grip which he gave her hand. The sight of her black gown and altered face moved him to pity her very sincerely. But his voice was as loud, and his manner as boisterous, as ever when he spoke to her. Could he have been convinced that the assumption of a soft tone and gentle manner would have been in this case a real act of benevolence, he would have striven to perform that act. But the idea was a wholly inconceivable one to him. Miss Fluke, I am inclined to believe, was much less accessible to emotions of compassion. She had, as she would have expressed it, "*to save her own soul*;" and that aim she pursued according to her lights with entire singleness of purpose, plunging onward in a straight line, and treading down sensibilities and susceptibilities and delicate little flowers of feeling with as little ruth as a bullock might be expected to feel for the daisies crushed by the plough he was drawing. The "wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower" would have appealed to Miss Fluke's imagination quite in vain.

"How are you, my dear afflicted friends?" said Miss Fluke, solemnly. The weather was warm, and Miss Fluke's face was very red, and her simple straw bonnet with white ribbons framed it in an incongruous manner. Her delicate lilac muslin, too, was scarcely in harmony with the very tough and stalwart character of her figure. "My dear afflicted friends," repeated Miss Fluke, "*how* are you?"

"Pretty well, thank you," said Penelope, coolly, "and how are you, poor creature?"

Miss Fluke opened her eyes very wide indeed. "Poor creature!" she repeated, in a puzzled manner.

"Yes; poor creature. Are we not all poor creatures? I didn't know that you had any dispensation from the common lot."

"No, no," interposed the Reverend Decimus, with obtuse cheerfulness. "To be sure not. Quite right, Miss Charlewood. We are all—one and all—*miserable* sinners. But, alas! all have not our glorious privilege of knowing that we are so."

The little lath-and-plaster house seemed to quiver as the brassy tones of Mr. Fluke's voice rang through it.

"What a horrid place this is!" said Augusta to her mother. "And that bare dreary field at the back! I thought I never should find the house."

"So *we* thought," said Penelope, dryly.

"Well, Penny, now I really think that very uncalled for and unkind. We have only been in town eight days, and it was impossible to be here sooner. This morning, just as I had made up my mind to make an effort and come to mamma, Mr. and Miss Fluke called. I told them of my intention, and they offered to accompany me."

The truth was, that Augusta, who had not got rid of her sensitive horror of "scenes," had considerably dreaded the meeting with her family, and had gladly accepted the Flukes' offer, thinking that any very confidential or agitating conversation upon family affairs would thereby be avoided. Penelope understood it all perfectly.

"And are you not surprised to see me and Hannah in this great city, my dear friends?" said Mr. Fluke. "You have not yet inquired what brings us hither—eh?"

"Papa is going to preach a charity sermon at the request of an old friend," struck in Miss Fluke. "Papa and my sisters and I have been at the sea-side, recruiting our strength for our winter duties."

The idea thus conjured up, of a fresh stock of vigour having been taken in by the whole Fluke family, was calculated to appal a weak mind.

"We had to pass through London on our way home, so papa has the precious opportunity of sowing the good seed amongst a very low and numerous congregation on the Surrey side of the river, *without* incurring any serious expense."

"Ah," observed Penny, "sowing the seed

for them comes cheaper than giving them bread, doesn't it?"

"And where are my brothers?" asked Augusta, languidly.

"At work," responded her sister, with brevity.

"Oh, ah, yes, of course. I know. But I mean, where do they live? You don't mean to say that there is room for you all *here*!"

"Well, love," said Mrs. Charlewood, "it is close quarters for 'em. But we 'ave just bedrooms enough, with the servant girl going 'ome to sleep. Watty finds it a bit dull, love."

"I should think so, mamma! Poor Watty! With his habits and tastes—and poor Clement, too, of course," added Augusta, hastily, catching her sister's eye.

Mrs. Charlewood's maternal heart had yearned towards her absent daughter, despite the cold selfishness of her letters. Now the meeting had come, and there was a leaden sensation of disappointment in the mother's breast. Augusta made it apparent in fifty ways, that she was henceforth apart from the rest of the family. She invited her mother to come and see her, but it was in a suppressed, dry manner, as though she were undecided whether to be ashamed or proud of the condescension. Augusta shrank from contact with poverty as she shrank from exposing her delicate skin to an east wind. And, to her, her mother's present circumstances meant great poverty. Mrs. Charlewood had most of the material comforts which she needed or desired; but to Augusta, born and cradled amidst great wealth, the absence of luxuries appeared privation. Penelope, with brave self-sacrifice, and it may be with a certain enjoyment in the long unused pleasure of whetting her keen tongue upon Miss Fluke's solid self-satisfied dullness, engaged the visitors in conversation, thus leaving her mother free to talk with Augusta. At length the latter rose to go. The Flukes rose also.

"We have been trying to induce Penelope to come and hear papa's sermon next Sunday," said Miss Fluke, impressively. "I hope *you* will come, at all events, Mrs. Charlewood. You were always a faithful member of papa's flock."

"It's a long way off, isn't it?" said Mrs. Charlewood, hesitatingly.

"Not at all," pronounced Miss Fluke, in her *infallible* manner. "No distance whatever. Papa preaches in the morning, and again in the evening. There is the name of the church written down."

"Well, we will think of it," said Penelope, shaking hands with Mr. Fluke. Augusta lingered to say a word or two to her mother, and then they all went out to the front door together.

The cabman was half reclining on the box, with one elbow supported on the roof of his cab. He had a pipe in his mouth, and was reading a Sunday paper.

"What are you reading, my good man?" demanded Miss Fluke, marching up to the vehicle.

"All right, mum," answered the cabman. He folded up the newspaper, thrust it into his pocket, and scrambled down in a stiff, bow-legged fashion to open the cab door.

Augusta entered the vehicle, and Mr. Fluke stood waiting for his daughter to do the same. But Miss Fluke still remained immovable, with her eyes fixed on the cabman, and one hand fumbling in her pocket. "What were you reading, my good man?" she repeated, glaring at him.

"Where to, sir?" asked the cabman, huskily, of Mr. Fluke. The reverend gentleman gave Mrs. Dawson's address in Mayfair.

"Here," said Miss Fluke, no whit abashed, and drawing a tract from her pocket, "here is a beautiful little story that I wish you would promise me to read in your leisure moments, my friend."

"All right, mum," rejoined the cabman, scrambling on to his box again.

"Take it, my good man; it is for you. Take it, and put it in your pocket."

"Thankee, mum," said the man, looking at her for the first time, as he gathered the reins in his hand, "I won't deprive you."

Mr. Fluke handed his daughter into the cab somewhat hastily, for the horse made a sudden plunge, and evinced an unexpected desire to start.

"I think," said Miss Fluke, with much solemnity, after they had ridden some distance in silence—"I think that I should *very* much like to be connected with a mission for the conversion of the London cabmen!"

CHAPTER VIII. CORDA MAKES A DISCOVERY.

A CROWD of people was pouring out of a large oblong brick church in a populous neighbourhood on the Surrey side of Blackfriars-bridge. It was a hot evening, and the faces of the congregation bore evidences of the high temperature within the church. Even the dusty streets and tainted atmosphere outside appeared cool and fragrant by contrast. The daylight had not yet faded from the sky, although the sun had gone down, reddening the haze and smoke of London until he looked like a golden ball cast into a flaming furnace. The Reverend Decimus Fluke had been preaching a charity sermon for the benefit of some ragged schools in the oblong church; and the Reverend Decimus Fluke's name had travelled beyond the limits of his own parish and his own town, as that of a zealous and powerful preacher of sound evangelical doctrine. He was looked upon as a shining light of the Low Church party, and the announcement of his name had attracted a large congregation. It was a well-dressed, well-to-do congregation, assembled from a wide circuit round. From Camberwell, Clapham, Brixton, and even Peckham-rye, the citizens and the citizens' wives and daughters had made long pilgrimages to hear what one old lady called "a good strong sermon;" and, it is to be hoped, also with some design of benefiting the ragged scholars on whose behalf

they were appealed to. But Miss Fluke's pious hope that the good seed would be sown by her father's instrumentality amongst the very wretched population of the neighbourhood seemed likely to be frustrated, for even the ordinary frequenters of the oblong church did not belong to anything like so poor a class as the majority of the inhabitants of the district. The very poor, the real labouring people, did not go to church, or at any rate did not go to that church. The incumbent, an old friend of Mr. Fluke, had invited that gentleman and his daughter to pass the remainder of the evening at his house. Mr. Lubbock, the curate, also an old acquaintance of the Flukes, and formerly of Eastfield, was to be of the party. They all came out of the vestry together, avoiding the crowd. At the gate a close carriage was drawn up, and some ladies and gentlemen were making their way to it across the stream of people.

"There," cried Miss Fluke, "are Augusta and the Charlewoods." The party from the vestry paused to accost them. There were Mr. and Mrs. Malachi Dawson, and Clement with his mother on his arm. When greetings had been interchanged, and a word or two said about the sermon, Miss Fluke demanded to know why Penelope and Walter had not availed themselves of that opportunity of edifying themselves. Mrs. Charlewood looked nervous. Augusta raised her eyes, and gave a little sigh, intended to express the hopelessness of her brother's and sister's spiritual condition.

"My sister Penelope prefers attending a place of worship in our immediate neighbourhood. I am unable to inform you why Walter did not think fit to come with us," said Clement, gravely.

"I'm going to Augusta's 'ouse with her," said Mrs. Charlewood. "She 'as asked me to stay the night there, and Clement will call for me to-morrow."

It was, in fact, Malachi Dawson who had invited his wife's mother to accompany them home; but poor Mrs. Charlewood was eager to exhibit Augusta in an amiable light. The three got into the carriage that was waiting.

"Can we set you down anywhere, Miss Fluke?" asked Augusta, as the servant was putting up the steps. Miss Fluke drew herself up rigidly, shut her eyes very tight, opened them very wide, shook her head violently, and replied with emphasis:

"Oh no, thank you; oh dear no. Not on any account whatever. I never ride in a coach on the Lord's Day. 'Thy cattle,' you know, Augusta. It's expressly mentioned. 'Thy cattle,' and 'thy man-servant,' too, you recollect."

"Good-bye, mother," said Clement. "I will come for you on my way home to-morrow."

"And, Clem dear," cried Mrs. Charlewood, leaning out of the window, and speaking very earnestly, "don't, above all, forget to tell Watty that I shall not be 'ome to-night."

"No, no, mother."

"Remember, love, *you've promised.*"

The carriage drove away, and left the little group standing just outside the church gate.

"If you are going home, your way lies for some distance in our direction, Charlewood," said Mr. Fluke.

Then the two elder clergymen moved away arm in arm, and the curate, with incomprehensible want of gallantry, hurried on to join them. Miss Fluke and Clement were left standing side by side. Under the circumstances there was nothing for it but for Clement to offer her his arm. She took it. If I were to say she seized it, the expression might not be too strong to convey the energy of Miss Fluke's action. They walked on in the wake of the three clergymen, tracking their black-coated figures through the crowd of passers-by. All the world seemed to be in the streets enjoying the twilight after the sultry glare of the day. It was not a quite easy task to steer Miss Fluke through a London thoroughfare. Her mode of progression was uncompromising. She turned neither to the right nor to the left, but pressed on valiantly with squared shoulders. This led to occasional complications of an unpleasant nature, and the frequent repetition of the angry question, "Where are you shoving to?" Presently they lost sight of the three black coats before them.

"I suppose you know the address of the house you are going to?" said Clement.

"No; I do not," replied Miss Fluke, in a firm cheerful voice.

Clement stared at her. The position was not an agreeable one.

"Had we not better press on, then, a little, and try to rejoin your party?" he suggested.

"I know we have to go across Blackfriars-bridge," said Miss Fluke.

It was at least a point to steer towards, and they hastened on at a round pace. They were now in a labyrinth of poor streets. Long lines of one-story houses, their fronts smeared with grime in streaks, like the traces of tears on a dirty face. Most of the doors were wide open, and children swarmed up and down the steps. Men in their shirt-sleeves stood at the open doors, smoking. At one house which they passed, a tall, dark, melancholy man, with tangled black hair, was leaning against the side-posts of the front door. He had a pipe between his teeth, but it had either never been lighted, or had gone out. He stood quite still with folded arms, and they saw him from a long distance as they came up the straight narrow street. When they were within a few yards of him, his eyes fell upon Miss Fluke and her companion, and quite suddenly he turned and entered the little house, shutting the door after him. Miss Fluke stopped short, with a cogitating expression of countenance.

"Now, where have I seen that man?" she said.

"His face is familiar to me—most familiar."

"I don't know, really," said Clement, trying to urge her forward again. "We had better be moving; it will be so exceedingly disagreeable for you if you lose your friends."

Miss Fluke continued to stand still in a meditative manner. You could not say she looked placid; she was always too obviously brimful of latent activity for that; but she appeared as impervious to the fact that she was blocking up the narrow foot-pavement as a steam locomotive might have been. A large dog that had tried to pass her, first on one side and then on the other, now made a rush, and squeezed himself between Miss Fluke's muslin skirts and the wall, causing her to stagger for an instant. Clement took advantage of the circumstance to pull her forward by the arm that rested on his, so they got under way again.

"That dog is going to the house where the man was," said Miss Fluke, looking over her shoulder, and speaking very loud. "Yes; see, he is sitting on the door-step waiting for somebody. Now I wonder where I can have seen that man's face! It is most familiar."

If it were difficult to steer Miss Fluke through the streets when she looked before her, it became almost impossible to do so when she walked with her head turned over her shoulder. Clement was almost in despair, when he spied a black-robed messenger of deliverance coming towards them. It was Mr. Lubbock, sent back to fetch Miss Fluke and guide her to her father.

"We missed you, and feared that you might not know the way," said Mr. Lubbock, saluting Clement.

The latter resigned his precious charge to the care of the curate. "My road lies in the opposite direction," he said—I am sorry to record—untruthfully. Miss Fluke shook hands with him and walked off with Mr. Lubbock, whom she speedily involved in dire confusion by reiterated and all-embracing questions as to the spiritual state of the poor in his parish.

Clement stood for one instant watching them, and was turning to pursue his own way, when the big dog bounced up to him again, and at the same moment a small hand was put into his, and a sweet voice said timidly, "Mr. Charlewood, won't you speak to me?"

"Corda!" he cried, in surprise. "Corda Trescott!"

"Yes," said Corda, smiling and panting, with the delicate colour changing in her cheeks, "it is Corda Trescott, that you were so good to."

"Are you alone, Corda?"

"Oh no; that gentleman has been taking me for a country walk. He is very kind, and often takes me out when papa has not time to go with me."

Corda pointed down the street to the house where the dog had been waiting, and at the door of which a queer hatchet-faced old man was standing, leaning on a knotted stick.

"This is his dog," continued Corda. "Such a clever dog! See, he knows I'm speaking of him; and he knows that you are a friend of mine too, else he would bark at you."

"Do you live in that house?" asked Clement.

He was pleased to see the child, but yet there was a pain in it too.

"We don't live in this street, but close by. That house is where the gentleman—the dog's master—lodges. And who do you think is his landlady, Mr. Charlewood? You'll never guess, I'm sure. Mrs. Hutchins! She and her husband have come to live in London."

Clement was less surprised than Corda had expected. "And do you know, Corda," said he, smiling, "that you have narrowly escaped seeing another old friend of yours? Now I challenge *you* to guess who it was." Corda's face grew burning red, and she cast down her eyes.

"I know," she said, in a whisper. "Yes, I saw her with you. It was Miss Fluke. I hid till she had gone away. I hope it wasn't wrong. Lately I feel so frightened, and my heart beats so when any one talks loud to me, or—or—goes on like Miss Fluke. But I know she means to be kind."

Clement was in no mood to blame Corda's avoidance of Miss Fluke with great severity.

"Good-bye, Corda," he said, taking both the child's hands in one of his. "Or stay, shall I give you into your friend's charge, or shall I take you home myself?"

Corda hesitated for a moment. Then she said: "It would save him the trouble, if you wouldn't mind."

"Not at all, Corda. Kind Fate has ordained that I shall be a squire of dames to-day; but, thank Heaven, there are dames and dames, eh, Corda?"

The child ran on in advance, and said a few words to the hatchet-faced old man. He slightly touched his hat to Clement as the latter passed, and then went into the house, calling his dog in after him. Clement was struck by the oddity of the old man's appearance. He was shabby and grotesque, and yet the manner in which he had saluted Clement had been that of a gentleman. Altogether, he seemed to belong to a class of which Clement had no knowledge.

"What is your friend, Corda?" he asked of the little girl.

"He is a second old man, Mr. Charlewood," replied Corda, innocently.

"A second old man?"

"Yes; he used to be a first old man in Ireland. He is very kind in reality, though he may seem cross at first, when you don't know him."

"Oh, he is a stage performer," said Clement, on whom the little girl's meaning had flashed suddenly.

"Yes; but we are nearly at home," cried Corda, eagerly, "and I haven't told you about my seeing Miss Mabel. I went to her house at Highgate, and stayed the day. And I am to go again. And they were so kind to me. And Dooley is very well and strong now. And, oh, Mr. Charlewood, isn't Miss Mabel sweet? When she smiles, I think she is like a picture. Don't you?"

Clement made some inarticulate sound, that

Corda accepted as an affirmative. "I shall tell her," she went on—"I shall tell her that I have seen you. You and she are my two best friends. I'm so glad! I always think of you when I am with Miss Mabel."

"No need to trouble her about me, Corda. She would not care—we never see—I have no opportunity of seeing Miss Earnshaw now. Is this your house? Good-bye, Corda."

"Good-bye, and thank you so very much," replied the child, in a subdued manner. Her quick sensibility had detected that something had jarred on Clement's feelings. She had not entered the sitting-room many minutes, when her father came in from the street.

"Got back all safe, little one?" said he.

"Yes, papa dear. Where's Alf?"

"He won't be home to dinner, nor perhaps to-night. I have just left him, and he asked me to answer a note for him. It's from the music-publisher that Lady Popham wished to consult about Alf. Alf said the note was in the pocket of the old coat he wears at home. You'll find it in his room. Bring it down, my darling."

Corda, delighted to be of use, ran up-stairs, and, taking the coat from the chair on which it lay, put her hand into the breast-pocket. The lining was torn, and Corda's slender fingers slipped down, not into the pocket, but between the cloth and the lining. She felt a paper and pulled it out. "I suppose this is the right one," said she to herself, and unfolded it to assure herself that it was so. The child had not read ten words before she became deadly white. Her hands and her whole frame trembled violently. She stood rooted to the ground, with her bright eyes distended and fixed upon the paper. Mr. Trescott, meanwhile, was drumming irritably with his fingers on the table down-stairs.

"Corda!" he called at length, standing at the foot of the stairs. "Corda, are you coming?" Then he limped up to Alfred's room. As Corda heard his footstep approaching, she thrust the paper into the breast of her frock, and seeing her white face in the glass, she rubbed the pale cheeks roughly and hastily with her hands, to bring the colour back.

"My child, what in the name of fate are you doing? Where is this note?" asked Mr. Trescott, impatiently.

"I can't find it, papa."

Corda's voice was husky, and she panted for breath as though she had been running quickly.

"Can't find it? Nonsense! Here it is in the outside pocket, the very first thing I come to! You are not apt to be so stupid, little one."

"Papa, I'm so—so tired—and I feel—giddy."

He caught her in his arms as she reeled forward. He laid her tenderly on the bed, called for assistance, cried over her, kissed her, and reproached her, all in a breath.

"Come here," he said to the servant who ran up-stairs at his loud vehement call. "Come here and undress her. Put her into the bed, quick, quick. But gently, gently. Don't be

so rough, woman! Good God, she's the tenderest little creature! Ah, Corda, naughty wicked Corda, you have been walking too far; overtaking your strength. My darling pet, it's not your fault. It's that infernal fool of an old man. Why did I let you go with him? I'll get her some wine. There is some of Alfred's down-stairs. Don't stir from her, woman, until I come back. Corda, Corda, my pretty one! My little gentle darling!"

The child was conscious, and tried to smile and thank him. When the servant began to undress her, she put her hand into her breast, drew it out fast clenched, and kept it so. They made her swallow some wine, and she lay very still and submissive in the bed. "Go and write your note, papa," she said. "I am quite well now. I will be very still, but I should like to be quite by myself, please."

"No, no; Mary must stay with you."

"Please not, dear papa! I shall not want any thing."

He remonstrated, but she begged so hard, that he had not the heart to refuse her. He could never be obdurate to Corda's pleadings.

"Go to sleep, my little lamb. That will be best for you. Go to sleep."

In the course of an hour or so he came up again, listened at the door, and then softly entered and looked at her. She seemed to be peacefully asleep. But the moment after he had left the room, her large hazel eyes were unclosed, and her pale lips formed inaudibly the reiterated sentence: "What shall I do? What shall I do?" over and over again for hours.

FROM BREMEN TO NEW YORK.

Of the many British subjects who go to New York, very few travel in the steamers that start from Bremen and touch at Southampton. The usual route, as every one knows, is from Liverpool; but the Bremen steamers present a scene so unique, that the voyager who has frequent occasion to visit America would do well now and then to choose the less ordinary passage.

Bremen is the port from which emigrants are chiefly taken from Germany to New York, where they are consigned to a commission of emigration, who sends them to their place of destination in one of the western states, Wisconsin being at present frequently selected as a field for enterprise. Many, however, stop at Chicago, in Illinois, which, as the great *dépôt* for agricultural produce, may now be regarded as internally the capital of the whole western division of the United States. Here the Germans constitute a large proportion of the population. Even in New York city itself the German element so strongly prevails, that at nearly every store a smattering of the language of fatherland, sufficient for small commercial purposes, has been acquired by the proprietor. In the underground beer saloons, which re-

mind one of the old fading-out "shades" of London, you will hear more German than English; "lager-bier," which is the staple commodity of the establishment, being pre-eminently a German institution.

It may be observed, by way of parenthesis, that a taste for lager-bier does not belong to the aristocratic proclivities of New York. Even at the humble oyster saloons this refreshing beverage is not to be obtained, though the lover of clams and oysters may be supplied to any extent with a detestable beverage which, for some unaccountable reason, is termed "ale." The cosmopolitan traveller, who ignores all prejudices save those of his own country and only respects those when he is at home, should, however, be warned that, to a beer-drinker, the humble lager—which is drawn deliciously cold—is the most grateful and refreshing drink conceivable. Unfortunately for its dignity, it bears a price which, though it would be deemed high in London, is low in New York. A glass costs five cents (say twopence-halfpenny), whereas a less quantity of detestable ale is sold at double the price. Hence the badness of lager's character. The demand for it is great, but the willingness to supply at places not expressly organised for its consumption is small. Ask at the bar of your hotel for lager, and, in the midst of a paradise of ales and whiskies, you will be told that it is not kept there, but that you may find it in the restaurant below-ground, which, in spite of its subterranean condition, exactly performs the functions of an English "tap." But do not flinch or feel humiliated; plunge boldly into the vault, and you will find the lager drawn cold from the cask, and served in one of those German glasses, narrow at the brim and broad at the bottom, a beverage worthy of Olympus. Above all things, avoid the before-mentioned ale, whether it be called Philadelphian or Scotch. Under the first name it is sour, under the second disagreeably sweet and smoky.

The maxim, "Cheap and nasty," sound in many cases, is sometimes sadly perverted. Many an honest Briton is convinced at the bottom of his heart that sprats are more relishing than whitebait, but few honest Britons would venture to express that conviction to, any save their most intimate friends.

The proverbial expression takes us back to the Bremen steamer, which we have most unceremoniously quitted. None of the citizens of the United States are more highly respected than the Germans, who are upheld as the type of all that is industrious, loyal, and inoffensive. The German is the model farmer, and to him will the great republic be chiefly indebted for the development of the lands in the Far West. But the German, when he is going across the Atlantic from Bremen to New York in the character of an emigrant, and takes up his temporary residence in the steerage, does not receive in advance one instalment of that respect which he may hope to acquire in the Western world. Most of the ship's officers are German; the head-

stewards and the under-stewards are German; but there is no compatriotic feeling that links them with their emigrant countrymen. The great Teutonic mass that lounges, plays cards, smokes, and does nothing, in the fore part of the vessel, is not recognised as belonging to any country whatever. Its position between the old world and the new is that of the converted Jew, compared by Sheridan to the blank leaf between the Old and New Testaments. It has been a caterpillar, and, by-and-by, if we are not disappointed, it will become a respectable, if not a magnificent, butterfly. But now it is a grub, and is called "Steerage."

Every society has its nigger, though you may not know where to find him. The nigger of London, I should say, would be the Jeames of the late Mr. Thackeray. If you walked arm in arm down Pall Mall with an inebriated member of the working class, well fortified with mail of corduroy and pearl buttons, you might set yourself right with your more credulous friends by declaring that you were a very advanced politician, and that your principles caused you to fraternise with the artisan. But if you selected as the partner of your promenade one of those showy gentlemen, who look so gorgeous with their plush breeches and powdered heads, it is questionable whether you could explain your position in a manner that would satisfy either the lofty subscriber of the nearest club-house, or the hard-working patron of the nearest coffee-shop.

"Steerage" is the nigger of the Bremen steam-ship. Keep above a certain level, and you, passenger as you are, will find yourself in a nice little republic, where the most ideal liberty and equality prevail—a republic where you may combine the easy habits of a court under one of the Stuarts, with the stern independence of a Pilgrim Father. But don't fraternise with "Steerage." You are a passenger, and not an emigrant. Nor must you let your dictionary or your Whateley's Logic lead you to a false conclusion. You may be emigrating from England, or even from Germany, and on this ground you may absurdly, though speciously, conclude that you are an emigrant. Nothing of the sort. You have your state cabin down below, or, being of an economical turn, you have your cabin on the upper deck, and you dine in the saloon. Argal, you are a "passenger" and not an emigrant.

Well do I recollect that, in the summer of 186—, when I crossed the Atlantic in a Bremen steamer, there was a French lady on board of by no means unprepossessing appearance, whose graceful freedom of conduct and native affability of manner would have made her the belle of the assembly if she had confined the exercise of those admirable qualities within defined bounds. But in the largeness of her heart she fraternised with "Steerage," and the terrible fact was whispered about by one of the stewards: himself a German. No sooner was it generally known, than her powers of fascination were gone, her charming little agaceries

were of no avail, and the passenger, differing in caste from the emigrant, looked upon her with a cold glazed eye.

I could compare our little republic on board the good ship Odin, to that of mediæval Venice. By a grand political operation, called the "Sealing of the Council," the people of the Adriatic state were reduced to a nullity, and the Grand Council became the reservoir of political power, whence flowed Doge, Council of Ten, Inquisition, Ministry, and every other Venetian institution. He who was lucky enough to have a seat or an available claim to one in the Grand Council at the time of the "sealing," had secured to himself and family as good a social position as that of any one else in the state. The Councillor of Ten might be the stronger for the time, but the Grand Councillor was a possible Councillor of Ten.

Now, we passengers of the good ship Odin were precisely in the condition of the members of the Grand Council of Venice. The respective prices we paid for our passage divided us into first and second class; but no social distinction was thereby created, and some of the sternest oligarchs were to be found among the second-class passengers. Perchance one or two of our German fellow-councillors might himself have been "Steerage" in his day; for, grand as we were, the mark of nobility was not on all our faces, nor should we have been utterly amazed if we had learned that one of our most aristocratic fellow-citizens had devoted himself to commercial pursuits in one of the odoriferous cellars of Dudley-street in dear old London. Never mind. "Passenger" was not "Steerage" now, and well we all knew it.

The arrangements of the vessel had not a little to do with this perfect equality among the passengers. Below the deck were the state cabins occupied by those of the first class, who, in strictness, had the sole right of entering the handsome drawing-room by which these were surrounded. On the deck was the dining saloon, used by both classes alike, though at different hours. Over the dining saloon, on the upper deck, were the cabins of the second class. Now the upper deck, being perfectly uncovered, and therefore more abounding in light and air than any other part of the vessel, was such a desirable promenade, that, whenever weather permitted, it was the favourite resort of all the first-class passengers, many of whom regretted that they had paid hard cash for a dignity which they had no desire to assume. The mid-ships and the walk in front of the cabins on one side of the upper deck were thus occupied by the second class, to whom they belonged by right, and the first class, who came to them by choice, and, save at night-time or meal-time, the rest of the passenger-part of the ship was deserted. Observe that this place of reunion did not extend beyond the mid-ships and the walk before the cabins on one side. The cabins on the other side were inhabited by a few of the "Steerage," who paid a little more for extra comfort, and avoided the

large black hole in which their less fortunate or less fastidious brethren were compelled to repose. However, they were looked upon as "Steerage," notwithstanding. Where there are niggers—that is to say, everywhere—the mulattoes are lightly esteemed.

On the whole, "Steerage," disregarded as he was by the aristocracy, did not perform the most uncomfortable voyage. Indeed, I strongly suspect that he got through his fortnight, and the wind that blew dead against us during the whole of that time, more easily than many a proud "passenger."

Sea-sickness, with all its faults, is still an occupation, and, indeed, so completely absorbs the mind and body as to render any other occupation superfluous. For the first two or three days, thanks to an unfavourable wind, which kept the ship in a perpetual roll, our time was well filled up; and when we had begun to grow acclimatised to the Atlantic, and the breezes gave, instead of taking away, our appetite, we were pleased at the recovery of an almost forgotten sensation. Moreover, mixed though select assembly as we were, composed of Englishmen, British Americans, citizens of the United States, and Germans, we were new to each other, and had much to ask and much to answer on topics of general interest. Rarely have anecdotes been listened to with more profound attention, rarely have indifferent jokes gone off with so much brilliancy. Folks were on board who had never heard the name of the facetious Miller, and a venerable "Joe," long deemed defunct in the old country, could be resuscitated like a rising sun. A certain amount of "chaff," too, was not only tolerated, but encouraged, and there was a general freedom of discourse which harmonised admirably with the sense of liberty inspired by the aspect of the boundless sea, and with those levelling principles that, inapplicable to "Steerage," firmly bound together us oligarchs of the Upper and Lower Ten. I may instance the case of some oarsmen of Canada, who, having acquired great kudos at some European regatta, were joyously returning home to commemorate their triumphs, and who, in the presence of ladies, used expressions which, though by no means uncommon in the nautical world, were carefully avoided by the late Mr. T. P. Cooke, when he idealised the character of the British sailor. Yet these expressions, which, on shore, beyond the extent of a certain radius to be carefully measured from the Tower of London, would have been as startling as a discharge of musketry, gave no offence whatever. A boatman, who had his cabin in the right place, and dined in the saloon, was still one of the fraternal oligarchy, and was as fully entitled as anybody else to talk in his own way. Indeed, as these same oarsmen had really distinguished themselves in their calling, and were extremely merry, good-natured fellows, affording much diversion to us all, I am by no means sure that if our floating Venice had been provided with a Golden Book, their names would

not have stood rather high on the aristocratic list. Prejudices of caste and sect were utterly annihilated, save that one sentiment which excluded "Steerage" with such iron force; and if "Steerage" did not, by some unfortunate accident, struggle beyond bounds, not a frown under any circumstances ruffled the oligarchic brow. Among the persons who derived pleasure from this state of freedom, none, I am sure, felt more hearty enjoyment than an American clergyman, with puritanical views, who had just "done" Italy, France, and England, and was on his way back to one of the northern cities. He was one of the best informed and most gentleman-like men I ever saw in the course of my life, and he maintained his dignity to the last. Nevertheless, his pleasant smile, and the dry humour, somewhat of the Scottish kind, with which he encountered spirits of a "faster" school, showed how perfectly he could sympathise for the while with the free citizens of a temporary republic, whose utterances must frequently have grated on his own moral convictions. To the more rational mirth of the voyage he was unquestionably the ablest and the steadiest contributor. He could converse fluently on any given subject, literary or political; and his chair, on deck, was the acknowledged focus round which were gathered all the best talkers on board. Let me add, that this effortless display of erudition, intelligence, and amiability was made under circumstances of extraordinary and physical difficulty. Our excellent "guide, philosopher, and friend," was, without exception, the worst sailor on board: never being entirely free from a sea-qualm during the whole of the voyage.

Long before we were half way across the Atlantic our last stories had been told, our last stock of information interchanged, our last joke fired off. Some of us had books, but one cannot read all day; and, in the case of many persons, the sea is unfavourable to study. Even the amusement of guessing what we should have for dinner, lost its zest after a while. The three meals per diem, which we were allowed, were so exceedingly substantial, savoury, and abundant, and withal so liberally seasoned by breezes, which kept the heartiest of us always hungry, that the more thoughtful of our body began seriously to calculate whether a man, who was weary of his troubles on land, and was in the receipt of a moderate income, might not reasonably make up his mind to pass the rest of his life on board the good ship *Odin*, and banish from his mind all consciousness that there was a world beyond. But among the truly admirable qualities of the food, variety was not included; and after a very few trials in the art of permutation, we came back to precisely the same dinner as that from which we started. Guessing, under these circumstances, soon becomes a dull and unprofitable exercise.

Vigorous efforts were made to lull time, and to break the ever-increasing monotony of existence. We boldly assumed the virtue of self-enjoyment, though we had it not. We screwed

up our sympathies until we almost sincerely believed that we were deeply interested in some ship that appeared just above the horizon; and when a black fish—which was pronounced by some of our zoologists to be a "porpess," by others a small whale—shot through the waves, there was a general rush to the bulwarks, and a shriek that was a most artistic imitation of genuine enthusiasm. A concert in the state saloon, to which both classes were politely invited by the captain, and in which two or three German ladies were the chief performers, now and then consumed an evening, and served to strengthen the paternal tie which united the two sections of the oligarchy into one compact body. A few attempts, too, were made to get up balls; but these did not greatly succeed, as they threatened to lead to something like fraternisation with "Steerage," who danced every evening to his own barrel-organ or fiddle; and this, as I have said, would have been an infringement of the law, in which the whole of our decalogue was comprised. But of all the attempts at pastime, a dreadful game called "ship-billiards" was the most utterly vain. Those who are unacquainted with that horrible recreation—and I trust there are many—may, if they please, picture to themselves a hop-scotch horoscope chalked upon the deck, that despairing pleasure-seekers may arm themselves with wooden spades, and by performing an action that combines the blow with the push, drive into the compartments which are numbered a set of clumsy wooden discs made heavy with lead. The compartments are eleven in number, ten being positive and the eleventh negative, so that if a disc remain in this last one at the end of the game, its number is to be deducted from the amount attained by the occupation of the others. If readers cannot easily realise this brief description, they are requested to pass on to the next paragraph, as the comprehension of ship-billiards would by no means compensate for the slightest mental effort.

The last resource was to promenade to the fore, and look down upon "Steerage" in his own proper quarters. The picture he presented, though exhibiting a vast quantity of dirt-colour, was by no means devoid of interest or variety. The Germans proper were notable for heavy figures, neutral-tint clothes, and faces which wore no expression whatever, but indicated a capacity for sleeping at will, that would enable its owners to get through any number of tedious days without feeling the weight of them. They had also a great talent for doing nothing while awake, and the number of male figures that stood for hours together staring before them, sometimes smoking, sometimes not, but obviously without any mental action whatever, was truly wonderful. Occasionally, a few of them reclined in classical attitudes, lazily playing at cards, and feeling as if sleep would overtake them long before the termination of the game. I doubt whether they played for any stakes; but whether or not, I am sure that nothing short of the most princely winnings or

the most ruinous losses could have imprinted a trace of emotion on their heavy features. Otherwise was it with the sprinkling of Bohemians who varied the mass. The women might be at once picked out by the gay handkerchiefs which they wore round their necks, and skull-cap fashion on their heads, and men and women were alike distinguishable by sharp vivacious features and keen intelligent eyes. There was, indeed, a sort of squalid finery about these Bohemians that rendered them fitting subjects for the imitation of supernumeraries engaged on dramas of the *Flowers of the Forest* kind, and a very small addition of tinsel would have at once fully qualified them for the stage. An Hungarian or two with a fierce Calmuck face presented another type of humanity, and another rarity was the Italian Swiss, who dressed more like a vagabond than any of his fellow-travellers, and was exactly the sort of man that one would not care to meet in a lonely mountain-pass, but whose large flashing eyes and white teeth, rendered visible by a ferocious grin, kept him above the suspicion of dull heavy villany. He might have been a brigand, but he could not have been a vulgar ruffian of the St. Giles's herd. A knowledge of that national Italian game which is played with the fingers only, was the distinctive accomplishment of this variety of the emigrants, and the vivacity with which each player darted forth his fingers and guessed in shouts the number, contrasted strangely with the dull manner in which the Germans played their cards. Nor was their proficiency in a game that required no implements whatever at all superfluous under the circumstances. There were not above three or four packs of cards among the whole body of the emigrants, who numbered from three to four hundred, and continuous play had so completely reduced these from a rectangular to an elliptical form, and had so thickly encrusted them with dirt, that by the time they reached Wisconsin they must have lost every quality associating them with the vice of gaming.

Taken altogether, "Steerage," asleep or waking, dull or vivacious, got very pleasantly through his long days, though he was without the relief of a regular meal: his food being apportioned to him in his own pan, which he took to the cook-house when his appetite prompted him so to do. As for his evenings, they were joyous. He had his regular *soirée dansante*, in which all the constituent particles that made up his aggregate body distinguished themselves greatly, not without the admiration of the oligarchs; for "Steerage" danced much more deftly than his betters.

A superb Atlantic sunset which welcomed our approach to the Western world, and which caused a gorgeous play of colours in the light clouds that skirted the horizon, came as a desirable object, and aroused the enthusiasm of us all, with the exception of three or four lady-passengers, German by nature, who, during the entire fortnight consumed by our passage, perpetually walked up and down the deck, pouring out to each other the

inmost secrets of their hearts with such perfect simultaneousness, that not one of them could have heard a syllable of the secrets communicated by her confiding and voluble friend. To them there was no need of external phenomena; they cared not for setting suns, they cared not for moonlit waves, they looked not to the right nor to the left, but all talked at once from the depths of their own inner consciousness.

Expectation, awakened by the feeling that our voyage would soon be over, revived cordiality among the passengers, and suggested topics for discourse connected with the future, now that we had used up the past. But the sight of land, while it afforded matter for inquiry and explanation as different objects came in sight, relaxed that tie which had bound us all close together. On shore we should no longer have any common interest, and our social status would no longer be the same. Orestes cared less for Pyrlades, Theseus became cool towards Perithous, while despised "Steerage," having put on his holiday clothes (previously secreted), rose to a level with the rest.

Thus was dissolved the oligarchic republic of the good ship *Odin*.

GOSPEL OAKS.

DR. DRYADUST (as represented by an army of writers in Notes and Queries) complains that gospel oaks, gospel elms, and sermon trees are one by one disappearing. Sometimes, the trees die from sheer old age; sometimes, they are rooted up by farm improvers, factory builders, villa speculators, or railway contractors. Dryadust complains that there is in every case one link broken between the present and the past: one little centre destroyed around which an old story had crystallised.

These gospel oaks and sermon trees point to a state of society and of feeling which has undergone much change. They were pulpits; they were religious memorials; they were county boundaries and parish limits; they were meeting-points for villagers at certain annual celebrations; they were all of these things by turns, or in different instances. Some of those who read this page may be aware of the recent existence of the Gospel Oak Fields at Kentish Town, London, now almost covered by railways and houses. Far away from the metropolis, there are the Gospel Oak Works, and the Wednesbury Oak Works, in the busy iron and coal district of South Staffordshire. There is a gospel oak at Cressage in Shropshire. There is another, generally known as the Shire Oak, between Wallsall and Crickfield. Gospel oaks also exist, or lately existed, not far from Winchester; and near Leamington; and in the park of Polstead Hall near Stowmarket; and near Ross in Herefordshire. Here and there, instead of a gospel oak, we meet with a gospel elm, a gospel tree, or a gospel bush.

Country people attach a religious meaning to these trees. Thus, the Cressage Oak in Shropshire, supposed by some to have derived its name from Christ's Oak, is said to mark the spot where the first Christian missionaries to that county preached, in the old Druidical days. In Worcestershire, there has been a controversy on the question whether the Apostle's Oak at Stanford Bridge, or the Mitre Oak at Hartlebury, was the scene of the controversy between St. Augustine and the British bishops, twelve hundred and sixty years ago. Of the gospel oak near Kentish Town, the tradition used to be that either St. Augustine or one of the Fathers once preached under the shadow of its overhanging boughs. Up in the far north, there is a venerable fir-tree on the western coast of Argyle, which, before the building of a regular church, was occasionally used as a pulpit; the minister and his flock clustered under its umbrageous canopy in fine weather, trusting to a neighbouring house as a place of assemblage in wet and cold weather. What was thus done in comparatively modern times may well have been the custom to a much greater extent in those olden days when churches were few, trees and green fields plentiful, and people widely scattered.

It is remarked by the Rev. A. G. H. Hollingsworth, in his *History of Stowmarket*: "When Christianity was first introduced into England, it was customary for the missionaries to select some one known gigantic tree as their place of assemblage. These leafy tabernacles were generally oaks of vast size and stature. Nor is it at all unlikely that some of them were thus chosen because from their gigantic bosom the sacred mistletoe of the Druids had been cut; and they were consecrated by superstitious veneration in the minds of the people as sacred places. Nor were they inappropriate pulpits for the apostolic bishops and priests, who thus in making their shades vocal with the gospel words, proclaimed by their voice the victory of Christ over darkness and idolatry." Mr. Hollingsworth was speaking specially of the gospel oak in the parish of Stowmarket. This measures forty-three feet in circumference at a height of four feet from the ground; it has a hollow trunk capacious enough to contain eight or ten persons. An examination of its rings leads to an opinion that it cannot be much less than a thousand years old.

The majority of traditions relating to such old trees are connected rather with the boundaries between parish and parish, or county and county, than with purely religious ceremonials. They speak of processions, perambulations, and beating the bounds, generally with more or less admixture of pious observances, but principally having in view the marking or identifying of corners in the boundary lines of local divisions. Near Ross, it used to be the custom, during the annual ceremony of beating the bounds, to read portions of the gospel under the shadow both of the gospel oak and the gospel bush. The Plestor Oak mentioned by White in his

Natural History of Selborne, marked the limit or end of the plestor, playstow, or play-place for the children of the village. The gospel oak at Stoneleigh in Warwickshire, standing in a little retired coppice, marks the boundary between the parishes of Stoneleigh and Baginton. A whole forest of such trees must have been seen by most readers of topographical literature. There are some lines by George Withers, written towards the close of the reign of Charles the First, which touch upon this subject :

That ev'ry man might keep his own possessions,
Our fathers used, in reverend processions,
With zealous pray'rs and with praiseful cheere,
To walke their parish boundes once a yeare,
And well knowne markes (which sacriligeous hands
Now cut or brake) so border'd out their lande,
That ev'ry one distinctly knew his owne,
And many brawles, now rife, were then unknowne.

The "sacriligeous hands" were the moody, gloomy iconoclasts of the Puritan body. Her- rick, in his "Hesperides," with a distinct allusion to the Holy Oak or Gospel Tree as a permanent landmark to define the boundaries of parishes or other local divisions, says :

Dearest, bury me

Under that Holy Oke or Gospel Tree ;
Where (tho' thou seest not) thou may'st think upon
Me, when thou yearly go'st procession.

Certain collateral speculations were put forward by the late Sir Henry Ellis, who, in his Notes to Brand's Popular Antiquities, made the following comments: "The procession-days or gang-days not only brought to the recollection of Englishmen the settlement of the Christian fathers on the soil, but they also impressed on the memory correct notions concerning the origin and nature of proprietorship in land. These religious processions marked out the limits of certain portions of land, under which the whole kingdom was contained; and in all these the principle of God's fee was recognised by the law of the people. The primitiæ, or cyrie scot or church-rate, is admitted as due throughout the bounds, and the tithes also, as charges on the parish; but, together with those admissions, there is formed in the mind a mental boundary; and a sacred restraint is placed upon the consciences of men, that commingles religious awe with the institution of landed right and landed inheritance, and family succession to it."

Some of the ceremonies connected with perambulation or beating the bounds have more of oddity than solemnity about them. It is said that some time ago, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, once every three years, the chief commissioner of the Tyne was wont to catch hold of the first pretty maiden he encountered on the banks of the Tyne, on the morning of the ceremony, and give her a kiss, a guinea, and a glass of wine—which, it is alleged, induced some of the maidens to put themselves in the way of being so captured.

As to the beating of parish boundaries, it is

chiefly a memory of the past. It used to be a glorious sight to see Bumble the beadle, with his retinue of leather-legged and muffin-capp'd charity boys, trudging through the streets, and banging away with their wands at any stones or inscriptions which denoted a parish boundary. There are some odd stories afloat about these perambulations. The Book of Days states that, in some districts, the parish authorities insisted on walking along the whole boundary-line. If a canal had been cut through the boundary, it was deemed necessary that some of the parishioners should pass through the water. Where a river formed part of the boundary-line, the procession either passed along it in boats, or some of the party stripped and swam along it, or boys were thrown into it at customary places. If a house had been erected on the boundary-line, the procession claimed the right to pass through it. A house in Buckinghamshire, still existing, has an oven through which the boundary-line passes; it was customary in the perambulations to put a boy into this recess, to preserve the integrity of the boundary-line. This was considered a good joke by the village lads, who became ambitious of the honour, and were wont to cast lots who should creep into the oven. Once the good wife had a fire in the oven at the critical moment; Tom Smith, the allotted hero, naturally objected to avail himself of the honour under those particular circumstances; the matter was compromised by his crawling over the roof of the oven instead of getting into it. About the beginning of the present century, when a procession of churchwardens, overseers, and charity boys was perambulating the parish of St. George, Hanover-square, they came to a part of a street where a nobleman's coach was standing across the boundary-line. The carriage was empty, waiting for the owner, who had gone into an adjoining house. The principal churchwarden desired the coachman to drive out of their way. "I won't," said he; "my lord told me to wait here, and here I'll wait." Whereupon the churchwarden coolly opened the carriage door, entered, passed out at the opposite door, and was followed by the whole procession. A writer in the work last named, says: "The last perambulation I witnessed was in 1818, at a small village in Derbyshire. It was of rather degenerate character. There was no clergyman present, nor anything of a religious nature in the proceedings. The very name processioning had been transmuted (and not inaptly) into possessioning. The constable, with a few labourers and a crowd of boys, constituted the procession, if such an irregular company could be so called. An axe, a mattock, and an iron crow were carried by the labourers, for the purpose of demolishing any building or fence which had been raised without permission on the waste ground, or for which the acknowledgment to the lord of the manor had not been paid. At a small hamlet, rejoicing in the name of Wicked Nook, some unfortunate

rustic had unduly built a pigsty; poor grundy was turned adrift. At various parts of the parish boundaries, two or three of the village boys were 'bumped'—that is, were swung against a stone wall, tree, post, or any other hard substance which happened to be near the parish boundary."

Beating the bounds is not yet quite dead. In the month of May, in this present year, the newspapers contained an account of a ceremony of the kind, performed in Buckinghamshire, under circumstances which seemed likely to render an appeal to the law necessary. The villagers, not well guided by those who organised the affair, "bumped" boys and men without their own consent, and were even with difficulty restrained from bumping the clergyman himself. At one spot, where the boundary was marked, they dug a hole in the ground, and thrust a boy's head into it.

A characteristic compensation for the rooting up of gospel oaks by railways is the conversion of certain railway arches into dissenting meeting-places. These are called "Gospel Arches."

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

WILD BOYS.

THERE is a fine Whateleyan passage in Plato, or a fine Platonic passage in Whateley, we are not sure which, that supposes man in this world to be like a creature shut in a dungeon, with only two apertures for light and sight. Through these, and these only, can he derive his knowledge of the outer world. Through these, and these only, come all his glimpses of tempests, sunshine, forests, lakes, seas, valleys, and mountains; but Death at last enters, breaks down the dungeon walls, and lets him forth into a freer and a wider sphere. This is a fine illustration of the soul's expansion from mortality to immortality.

The transmutation of the savage into the civilised man is, however, a change scarcely less extraordinary, and in the last century some philosophical doctors, both in England and France, devoted much time to discussions on this curious branch of moral medicine. Willis and Chretien in England, and Pinel in France, carried these studies to great perfection. The accidental discovery of two wild semi-idiotic boys, the one in a German forest in 1725, and the other in a French forest in 1798, enabled these philosophers to make some practical and very curious experiments.

In 1725, a boy was found running wild in the woods near Hamelen. Hamelen is a town on the Weser, twenty-five miles south-west of Hanover—our and their George the Second made a good harbour for the place. Hamelen is celebrated for its salmon fisheries, its odorous tanneries, its steaming breweries of rich creamy beer, its distilleries of strong waters, its tobacco and pipe manufactories—those affectionate twin trades. It is famous for all these things, but still more famous for Robert Browning's delightfully humorous poem of the Pied

Piper, that droll enchanter who, not being paid by the cheating corporation of the Hanoverian town his promised ten thousand guilders for freeing the place of rats, led off all the children of the town into a neighbouring hill and there disappeared with them.

One day, in 1725, that shrewd cynical king, George the First, having got back for a time to his beloved country, was out hunting near Hamelen with his hideous mistresses and motley court. The huntsmen had wound their French horns, and ridden deep into the forest of Hertzswold. There, in a glade, they found and captured a wild boy, supposed to be about twelve years old, who had long subsisted in the forest on roots, leaves, berries, and the bark of trees. His only costume consisted of part of the collar of a shirt. The cynical king and his ugly favourites, all rouge and black wig, gathered round the boy with extreme curiosity, and prettily assumed pity. His costume was not extensive, but what there was of it proved he had once lived among civilised people. Many thought he was the child of some fugitive robber or murderer, who had either died or purposely abandoned him. Others traced him to the descendant of some wretch who had fled during the old devastating German wars, gradually grown fond of the mere animal life, and bred up his children as savages. But the general belief was this: as Hamelen was a town where criminals were confined to work upon the fortifications, it was conjectured at Hanover that Peter (he was christened on the spot) might be the issue of one of those criminals, who had either wandered into the woods and could not find his way back again, or, being discovered to be an idiot, was inhumanly turned out by his parent, and left to perish or shift for himself. In the following year he was brought over to England by the order of Queen Caroline, then Princess of Wales, and put under the care of Dr. Arbuthnot, with proper masters to attend him. But, notwithstanding there appeared to be no natural defect in his organs of speech, after all the pains that had been taken with him he could never be brought distinctly to articulate a single syllable, and proved totally incapable of receiving any instruction. He was afterwards entrusted to the care of Mrs. Titchborne, one of the queen's bedchamber women, with a handsome pension annexed to the charge. Mrs. Titchborne usually spending a few weeks every summer at the house of Mr. James Fenn, a yeoman farmer at Axter's-end, Hertfordshire, Peter was left to the care of Mr. Fenn, who was allowed thirty-five pounds a year for his support and maintenance. After the death of James Fenn, he was transferred to the care of his brother, Thomas Fenn, at another farm-house called Broadway, where he lived with the several successive tenants of the farm, and with the same provision allowed by government to the time of his death, February 22, 1785, when he was supposed to be about seventy-two years of age. Peter was well made and of the middle

size. His countenance had not the appearance of an idiot's, nor was there anything particular in his form, except that two of the fingers of his left hand were united by a web up to the middle joint. He had a natural ear for music, and was so delighted with it that, if he heard any musical instrument played, he would immediately dance and caper about until he was exhausted with fatigue, and though he could never be taught the distinct utterance of any word, yet he could easily learn to hum a tune.

Whatever he might have been when first caught by King George and his two sultanas, "the Maypole and the Elephant," Peter, in the quiet farm in Hertfordshire, neither went on all fours in preference to ordinary pedestrianism, nor did he live in trees. He was, on the contrary, excessively timid and gentle, and could be ruled by a child. He was in no way vicious. Before the approach of bad weather he always appeared sullen and uneasy. At particular seasons of the year he showed a strong fondness for stealing away into the woods, where he would feed eagerly upon leaves, beech-mast, acorns, and the green bark of trees. His keeper at such times generally kept a strict eye over him, and sometimes even confined him, because if he rambled to any distance from his home he could not find his way back again; once in particular, having gone beyond his knowledge, he wandered as far as Norfolk, where he was taken up, and, being carried before a magistrate, was committed to the house of correction in Norwich, and punished as a vagrant, who would not—indeed, he could not—give any account of himself.

During his detention the bridewell building caught fire, and poor Peter all but perished. He seemed to have no sense of danger, and could not be drawn away from staring and wondering at the fire. Mr. Fenn having advertised him in the public papers, he was released and brought back to his usual place of abode.

On January 7, 1767, Peter was brought to court, like Caliban, to be seen by the royal family.

Peter, who had the honour of being under the care of Swift's friend, the learned and excellent Arbuthnot, had also the honour of being made the subject of a philosophical essay by the eccentric Lord Monboddo, that old Scotch nobleman, who fervently believed that all men were born with tails, but that the nurses slyly pinched them off to conceal our relationship to the monkey. He says: "It was in the beginning of June, 1782, that I saw him in a farmhouse called Broadway, within about a mile of Berkhamstead, kept there upon a pension which the king pays. He is but low of stature, not exceeding five feet three inches, and, although he must now be about seventy years of age, has a fresh healthy look. He wears his beard. His face is not at all ugly or disagreeable, and he has a look which may be called sensible and sagacious for a savage. About twenty years ago he was in use to elope and be missing for several days, but of late he has been quite tame, rather keeps in the house or

saunters about the farm. He has been the last thirteen years where he lives at present, and before that he was twelve years with another farmer, whom I saw and conversed with. This farmer told me that he had been put to school in Hertfordshire, but had only learnt to articulate his own name, Peter, and the name of King George, both which I heard him pronounce very distinctly. But the woman of the house where he now is told me that he understood everything that was said to him concerning the common affairs of life, and I saw that he readily understood several things that were said to him while I was present. Among other things, she desired him to sing Nancy Dawson, which he did, and another tune which she named. He never was mischievous, but had all that gentleness of nature which I hold to be characteristic of our nature, at least till we become carnivorous and hunters or warriors. He feeds at present as the farmer and his wife do; but, as I was told by an old woman (one Mrs. Collop, living at a village in the neighbourhood called Hempstead, who remembers to have seen him when he first came to Hertfordshire, which she computed to be fifty-five years before the time I saw her), he then fed very much upon leaves, and particularly upon the leaves of cabbage, which he ate raw. He was then, as she thought, about fifteen years of age, walked upright, but could climb trees like a squirrel. At present he not only eats flesh, but has also got the taste of beer, and even of spirits, of which he inclines to drink more than he can get. And the old farmer above mentioned, with whom he lived twelve years before he came to this last farmer, told me that he had acquired that taste before he came to him, which is about five-and-twenty years ago. He has also become very fond of fire, but has not yet acquired a liking for money, for, though he takes it, he does not keep it, but gives it to his landlord or landlady, which, I suppose, is a lesson that they have taught him. He retains so much of his natural instinct, that he has a fore-feeling of bad weather, growling, and howling, and showing great disorder before it comes."

Lord Monboddo had strong opinions, like Rousseau, of the savage being the perfect man, and their life being happier than ours. Dr. Johnson, who visited the eccentric man when in Scotland, ridiculed this theory to Boswell.

"No, sir," he said, "the savages have no bodily advantages beyond those of civilised men. They have not better health; and as to care or mental uneasiness, they are not above it, but below it, like bears. No, sir, you are not to talk such paradox; let me have no more on't."

Poor Peter died in 1785, and was buried opposite the porch of Northchurch church. A brass plate was put up to his memory inside the building, at the expense of the Treasury. On the top of the plate is a sketch of the head of Peter, drawn from a very good engraving of Bartolozzi, and underneath it an inscription giving his history in little.

A wild boy, about eleven or twelve years of

age, was captured in the woods of Caune, in the department Aveyron, in the south of France. He had been seen some time before in the woods looking after acorns and roots, upon which he subsisted. He was met towards the close of the year 1798 by three sportsmen, who seized him at the instant he was climbing a tree to evade their pursuit. They conducted him to a neighbouring village, and put him under the care of an aged matron; from whom, however, before the end of a week, he contrived to escape, and fled to the mountains, where he wandered about during the severity of a most rigorous winter, clad only in a tattered shirt. At night he retired into solitary places, approaching, as the day advanced, the neighbouring villages; and in this manner he passed a vagrant life, till the time in which, of his own accord, he sought refuge in a dwelling-house in the canton of St. Sernin. Here he was retained and taken care of for two or three days, and from thence was sent to the hospital of St. Afrique, afterwards to Rhodéz, where he was kept for several months. During his abode in these different places, he appeared to be always equally wild, impatient of restraint, and capricious in his temper, continually endeavouring to get away.

A scientific clergyman, then conceiving that the education of this young savage might throw some light on Rousseau's theories, and on the moral science of man, sent the wild boy to Paris in 1799, under the care of an old man, who promised to be a father to him if the world of Paris should ever get tired of and abandon him. He was the lion of Paris for a month or so. The great wonder there was what he would say of Paris when he began to talk and observe. At present he neither observed nor spoke, and was, in fact, a slovenly, rather disgusting, boy, subject to convulsive motions, indifferent to everybody and everything, and biting and scratching at all who resisted his will. The excellent Abbé Sicard, the friend of the deaf and dumb, considering that society had incurred obligations to this poor creature that she was bound to fulfil, entrusted him to the care of M. Itard, the physician to the National Institution of Deaf and Dumb. M. Pinel, a physician profoundly skilled in diseases of the mind, drew up a report of the state of intellect he found existing in the wild boy of Aveyron.

Beginning with an account of the sensorial functions of the young savage, Citizen Pinel represented his senses as in such a state of inertia, that this unfortunate youth was found, according to his report, very inferior to some of our domestic animals. His eyes were without steadiness, without expression, wandering from one object to another, without fixing upon anything; so little instructed in other respects, and so little experienced in the sense of touch, that he was unable to distinguish between an object in relief and a painting: the organ of hearing was alike insensible to the loudest noises and to the most charming music; that of the voice was still more imperfect, uttering only a guttural

and uniform sound; his sense of smell was so little cultivated, that he seemed to be equally indifferent to the odour of the finest perfumes and to the most fœtid exhalations; finally, the sense of feeling was limited to those mechanical functions which arose from the dread of objects which might be in his way.

Proceeding to the state of the intellectual faculties of this child, the author of the report exhibited him as incapable of attention, and, consequently, of all the operations of the mind which depended upon attention; destitute of memory, of judgment, even of a disposition to imitation; and so bounded were his ideas, even those which related to his immediate wants, that he could not open a door, nor get on a chair to obtain the food which was put out of the reach of his hand; in short, having no means of communication, attaching neither expression nor intention to the gestures and motions of his body, passing with rapidity and without any apparent motive from a state of profound melancholy to bursts of immoderate laughter; insensible to every species of moral affection, his discernment was never excited except by the stimulus of gluttony; his pleasure, an agreeable sensation of the organs of taste; his intelligence, a susceptibility of producing incoherent ideas connected with his physical wants; in a word, his whole existence was a life purely animal.

Citizen Pinel ended by considering the boy's state as exactly analogous to the idiot children at the Bicêtre, and therefore unimprovable.

M. Itard was, however, wiser: he did not think the case by any means hopeless. Still, it was not encouraging. The boy was always trying to escape into the woods. He smelt at everything that came in his way. He tore open with his nails a canary-bird that was given him, stripped it of the feathers as if to eat it, smelt at it with disapproval, then threw it away. There were twenty-three scars upon his body, some scratches and wounds from thorns and branches, others the bites of animals. He at first lived on potatoes and raw acorns, and ate them, husks, rind and all. It was a long time before he could be induced to lie in a bed. The general supposition was that he had been abandoned when he was five years old, and had lived seven years in solitude in the woods.

M. Itard went to work with true French mathematical precision, directing his efforts to five primary points.

Firstly. To attach the wild boy to social life, by rendering it more pleasant to him than that which he was then leading, and, above all, more analogous to the mode of existence that he was about to quit.

Secondly. To awaken the nervous sensibility by the most energetic stimulants, and sometimes by lively affections of the mind.

Thirdly. To extend the sphere of his ideas, by giving him new wants, and by increasing the number of his relations to the objects surrounding him.

Fourthly. To lead him to the use of speech by subjecting him to the necessity of imitation.

Fifthly. To exercise frequently the most simple operations of the mind upon the objects of his physical wants; and, at length, by inducing the application of them to objects of instruction.

The wild boy's petulant activity at first degenerated into a dangerous apathy and a desire for solitude, in order to escape the curiosity and importunities of sight-seers. Except when hunger led him to the kitchen, he was almost always to be found squatting in a corner of the garden, or concealed in the second story of some ruinous buildings. In this deplorable situation he was seen by some people from Paris, who, after a very short examination, adjudged him to be only fit to be sent to Bedlam. As if society had a right to take a child from a free and innocent life, and dismiss him to die of melancholy in a madhouse, that he might thus expiate the misfortune of having disappointed public curiosity!

His indolence, long sleeps, races in the open air, and his frequent and excessive meals, were all borne with patiently by good M. Itard. Sudden changes of atmosphere delighted the young savage, and he broke into mad peals of laughter if the sun flashed out suddenly from behind clouds. Snow made him leap for joy; he would roll himself half naked in it, and devour it by whole handfuls. He sometimes broke into fits of ungovernable rage. Often he would cease to rock himself to and fro, his usual habit, and would sink into fits of melancholy reverie, staring at water, or remaining half the night looking at the moon, breathing hard and snoring at intervals. By degrees M. Itard reduced his meals, regulated his sleep, and made his exercise more subservient to his instruction.

The senses of this wild boy were for a long time in a strange state of torpor. He never sneezed or shed tears. He would squat down at the asylum on the turf, and remain for hours in the wind and rain. If live coals fell from the grate near him, he would snatch them in his hand, and throw them back without alarm. He would eat potatoes burning hot. His hearing was equally stagnant; he paid no attention even to the firing of pistols close to him, but was always alive to the cracking of a walnut, his favourite fruit.

The nervous power being feeble in all the senses, M. Itard made it part of his plan to develop sensibility. The boy was accustomed to the use of the warm bath, and taught to regulate its temperature himself. The use and value of clothing was taught him by his being exposed to the cold within the reach of his clothes, until he found out the method of putting them on himself.

M. Itard says that he then roused the susceptibilities of joy and anger. To use his own words:

"I provoked the latter, only at distant intervals, in order that the paroxysm might by that means be more violent, and always be attended with a plausible semblance of justice. I sometimes remarked that, at the moment of his most violent indignation, his understanding

seemed to acquire a temporary enlargement, which suggested to him some ingenious expedient for freeing himself from disagreeable embarrassment."

The poor boy was as easily delighted as he was impassioned. A ray of the sun, received on a mirror, reflected in his chamber, and thrown on the ceiling; a glass of water, which was made to fall, drop by drop, from a certain height on the end of his fingers whilst he was bathing; and even a little milk, contained in a wooden porringer which was placed at the further end of his bath and which the oscillations of the water moved about, excited in him lively emotions of joy, which were expressed by shouts and the clapping of his hands. These were very nearly all the means necessary in order to enliven and delight, often almost to intoxication, this simple child of nature.

As the wild boy advanced in civilisation, he began to inherit its drawbacks. He caught violent colds, and, to his horror and dismay, began to sneeze. His first sneeze brought on a fit.

M. Itard's next endeavour was to create in this poor boy the vilius corpus of Parisian philosophy—new wants, trusting that new wants would bring new ideas. Toys were given him; but instead of interesting, they only vexed him, and he sought every opportunity to hide or destroy them. They seemed to make him think, and thinking, or rather trying to think, gave him pain. The kind but rather tormenting tutor then tried to rouse his memory and attention by putting a chesnut under one of three silver goblets, and playing at thimble-rig changes with them. These changes he was quick in detecting. For all sweetmeats and delicate food the Aveyron savage entertained an insurmountable aversion. In vain the philosopher tried to inspire him with a dangerous liking for strong liquors and highly spiced dishes; but lentils and such favourite food were rewards that could induce him to go anywhere and do anything. His great delight was being driven out into the country; but the hills and woods of Montmorency roused even in a short visit all his former savage restlessness and desire for liberty. His walks were, therefore, afterwards restricted to the gardens of the Luxembourg and the grounds of the Observatory.

To his governess the young savage displayed great affection. M. Itard says:

"He never leaves her without evident uneasiness, nor ever meets her without expressions of satisfaction. Once, after having slipped from her in the streets, on seeing her again he burst into a flood of tears. For some hours he still continued to show a deep-drawn and interrupted respiration, and a pulse in a kind of febrile state. Madame Guerin having then addressed him in rather a reproachful manner, he was again overwhelmed with tears. The friendship which he feels for me is much weaker, as might naturally have been expected."

We should have been strongly inclined to

think so, considering the persecuting though sensible mode of education adopted by M. Itard.

In leading the wild boy to the use of speech, M. Itard was far from successful. Finding he had a preference for the vowel O, the tutor gave the boy the name of Victor, to which he always came. After great difficulty he was taught the word *lait*; but he used it for everything, and generally to show pleasure at anything. He next learnt the use of the liquid *l*, *lia*, which he caught from the name of Julia, a little daughter of his governess, to whom he seemed attached. His last and final acquisition was the exclamation "O Dieu!" which he learnt from Madame Guerin, his governess. He pronounced it "O Diie!" In signs to express his wants, he was, however, quite a pantomimist. His conduct to the often impertinently curious Parisians who visited him, was droll from its extreme sincerity:

"A great number of the curious know how, with more natural frankness than politeness, he dismissed them, when fatigued with the length of their visits; he presents to each of them, and yet without a countenance of contempt, their cane, gloves, and hat, pushes them gently towards the door, which afterwards he violently shuts upon them."

M. Itard's succeeding effort was to follow out Sicard's plan of deaf-and-dumb education, and to show the boy the connexion between words and objects. He drew keys, scissors, &c., on a black board, and hung below the outline drawings the objects indicated. Victor was then taught to select them when transposed, and rearrange them in proper order. This not succeeding very well, M. Itard tried pieces of coloured paper, and these Victor soon learned to associate with the objects on which they had at first been placed. At last the temper of the savage broke out as the tasks grew more numerous and complicated. He threw down the pasteboards, and ran to his bed in a fury. From there he was always again led back to his work.

"My perseverance," says the preceptor, "lasted only a few days; for it was at length overcome by the unconquerable independence of his spirit. His emotions of anger became more frequent, more violent, and resembled the paroxysms of rage similar to those of which I have already spoken; but with this striking difference, that the effects of his passion were now less directed towards persons than things. He would, when he was in this humour, gnaw the bed-clothes, even the mantelpiece, throwing about in his chamber the fire-irons, the cinders, and the burning coals, and would conclude the scene by falling into convulsions, which seemed to be of a nature somewhat analogous to those of epilepsy—a complete suspension of the sensorial functions. I was obliged to yield when things had arrived at this pitch; and yet my acquiescence had no other effect than to increase the evil; its paroxysms became more frequent, and liable to be renewed by the least opposition, often even without any evident cause."

M. Itard felt that the crisis had arrived. Once victorious, the boy would be for ever unam-

able. He resolved to follow the plan of the great Boerhaave, at the Harlem madhouse. The boy had a great terror of looking down from a height. In one of his paroxysms, before epilepsy had supervened, M. Itard says:

"I suddenly opened the window of the chamber, which was on the fourth story, looking down upon a rough pavement. I approached him with every appearance of fury, and seizing him forcibly, I held him out of the window, his face directly turned towards the bottom of this precipice. When, after some seconds, I withdrew him from this situation, he appeared pale, covered with a cold sweat, his eyes moistened with tears, and still agitated with a slight trembling, which I attributed to the effects of fear. I then took him again to his boards; I made him gather up his scattered papers, and insisted that they should be all replaced. All this was executed, although, it must be confessed, in a slow and rather slovenly manner. He did not, however, venture to betray any impatience. After it was done, he threw himself on his bed, and burst into a flood of tears."

The boy's indignation after this took only the simpler form of murmurs and tears. Victor, once subdued, soon learned to arrange his pasteboard alphabet, to combine words, and to distinguish many of the objects which they stood for. At last, when he went for his daily walk to one citizen Lemert's, where he used to have milk given him, he would secrete the letters *L a i t*, and, when he got there, arrange them on the table to imply his want.

From these experiments, valuable as the first step in that philanthropic and excellent task, the education of idiots, M. Itard, a disciple of Locke and Condillac, drew the following deductions, utterly opposed to the wild and poetical theories of Rousseau:

"1. That man is inferior to a great number of animals in a pure state of nature, a state of vacuity and barbarism, although it has been unjustly painted in colours the most attractive; a state in which the individual, deprived of the characteristic faculties of his species, drags on miserably, equally without intelligence and without affections, a life that is every moment subject to danger, and confined to the bare functions of animal nature.

"2. The next conclusion that may be drawn is, that moral superiority which has been said to be *natural* to man, is merely the result of civilisation, which raises him above other animals by a great and powerful stimulus. This stimulus is the predominant sensibility of his species, the essential property from which flow the faculties of imitation, and that unintermitting propensity which forces him to seek, in new wants, new sensations.

"3. It may be observed that this imitative power, adapted for the education of all his organs, and especially for the acquisition of speech, although very energetic and active during the first years of life, is rapidly enfeebled by the progress of age, insulation, and all the other causes which tend to deaden the nervous

sensibility. From whence it results that the articulation of sounds, which is beyond contradiction, of all the effects of imitation, the most inconceivable and advantageous result, cannot fail to experience innumerable obstacles at an age which has not advanced beyond the period of infancy.

"4. We may likewise remark, that there exists equally with the savage the most insulated, as with the citizen raised to the highest point of civilisation, an uniform proportion between their ideas and their wants; that their continually increasing multiplicity, in a state of polished society, ought to be regarded as one of the grand instruments for producing the development of the human mind; so that we may be allowed to lay it down as a general proposition, that all the causes, whether accidental, local, or political, which tend to augment or diminish the number of our wants, contribute of necessity to extend or to contract the sphere of our knowledge, and the empire of the sciences, of the fine arts, and of social industry."

What height of mental development the wild boy of Aveyron reached at last, we have not been able, after some research, to ascertain. If the poor boy did not become a Solomon or a Shakespeare, he at least proved a capacity for development, always latent in the minds of idiots.

THE NORTH POLE QUESTION.

ONE of these days, Brigham Young, if he has still sufficient stamina remaining, may have to make another exodus, and, leaving the Salt Lake, migrate to some more secluded spot. If he has not already made his choice, we seriously recommend him to try the North Pole—and not to be too long about it, either, lest the lodgings to let there should be previously engaged. But the Mormon leader is not the man to *hire*; he prefers *taking* a residence in fee simple. In that case, despatch is still more urgent; for the French are threatening to plant the tricolour flag on the northern extremity of the terrestrial axis.

Both the Poles have attracted much attention of late. The close of the last century left them labouring under the accusation of being masses of ice, concentrations of cold, defying the boldest discoverer to reach them. They concealed no secret, it was thought, for their condition was plain. That condition could be no other than a homogeneous and unchanging state of glacier and snow, ice piled upon ice, drift heaped over drift, frost binding still faster the effects of previous frost. Zero of Fahrenheit was their mildest temperature. Water would be a thing unknown, if there were any living creature there to know. Learned men, indeed, wished those extreme points to be reached, as curiosities of physical geography; but travellers cared little about reaching them (the practical worthlessness of any North-West Passage being ascertained), convinced of their being uninhabitable.

Of late years a change has come over the spirit of the Polar dream. Extenuating circumstances have been successively discovered which have led to a more favourable opinion of the slandered regions, Antarctic as well as Arctic. It was remembered, too, that the gifts of Providence are remarkable for their balance and compensation; that the Great Creator of all things has made nothing in vain; that an apparent and obvious evil is often made up for, by unsuspected good and unforeseen advantages; that hurricanes purify a pestilential atmosphere; that a sterile soil may hide mineral wealth; that equatorial heats mature invaluable products; that cold countries are exempt from many insect, and almost all reptile, plagues. If so, where is the impossibility, or even the improbability, that behind and within the icy barrier with which we are acquainted, there may exist some accessible tract of sea or land of which as yet we are ignorant?

The area included by the Antarctic circle, equalling in extent one-sixth part of the whole *land* surface of our planet, has had its character immensely raised by the publication of Maury's Physical Geography of the Sea.

Southern explorers, as far as they have penetrated within its limits, tell us of high lands and mountains of ice. Ross, who went the furthest of all, saw volcanoes burning in the distance. The belt of ocean that encircles our globe on the Polar side of 55 degrees south, is never free from icebergs. They are found in all parts of it all the year round. Many of them are miles in extent and hundreds of feet in thickness. The nursery for the bergs, to fill such a field, must be enormous. And such a nursery cannot be on the sea, for icebergs require to be firmly fastened to the shore until they attain full size. They, therefore, in their mute way, are evidence of Antarctic shore-lines of great extent—of deep bays where they may be formed, and of lofty cliffs whence they may be launched.

Again: it seems to be a physical necessity with our planet, that land should not be antipodal to land. Except a small portion of South America and Asia, land is always opposite to water. Only one twenty-seventh part of the land on earth is antipodal to land. Now, the belief is that, on the Polar side of 70 degrees north, we have mostly water, and not land. On the other hand, "there is now no doubt," says Dr. Jilek, in his *Lehrbuch der Oceanographie*, "that around the South Pole a great continent is spread, mainly within the Polar Circle."

Not only is the Antarctic continent considered proven, but there are facts that indicate that the climate is mild—mild by comparison—within the Antarctic Circle. Those facts and circumstances are, a low barometer, a highly rarefied atmosphere, and strong winds from the north. We have not space here to deduce the consequences which follow from these undisputed facts; but the winds were the first to whisper the news that the Antarctic winters

were unlike the Arctic in respect to their rigour. Within the Antarctic Circle, the winds bring air which has swept over water for hundreds of leagues in all directions. Now, the aqueous vapour which the air carries with it, is one of the most powerful modifiers of climate known. By simply sending moist air to the top of snow-capped mountains, condensing its moisture, and bringing it down to the surface again, it is made *hot*. Although, by going up, the air be cooled, it is at the same time expanded, and receives, as sensible heat, the latent heat of its vapour. Being brought down to the surface again, and compressed by the whole weight of the barometric column, it is hotter than it was before, by the amount of heat received from its vapour.

We have only to suppose that air, charged with vapour, has to cross, before arriving at the place of Polar calms, an Antarctic mountain range, whose summits are pushed up high into the regions of perpetual snows—and we can easily conceive the modifications of climate that would thence ensue. The Antarctic climate *must* be comparatively mild. Therefore, pleads Maury enthusiastically, Antarctic exploration merits favourable consideration among all nations.

An expedition is being prepared which will not be content, it says, with the shortcomings of Parry, Franklin, and the rest, but which sets out with the determination of reaching the Pole itself, and of not being satisfied until it gets there. It will start, under the patronage of the Paris Geographical Society, as soon as the necessary funds have been subscribed—towards which the Emperor of the French has already contributed the handsome sum of two thousand pounds.

The author of the project, M. Gustave Lambert, a French hydrographer trained in the Polytechnic School, expects to solve the problem by taking the route of Behring's Strait (the sea-channel which separates Asia from America), instead of proceeding, like most other Arctic explorers, by Davis's Strait and Baffin's Bay. For this he gives his reasons in a lucid pamphlet, "*La Question du Pôle Nord*." Moreover, M. Lambert's conviction of the possibility of reaching the North Pole is based neither on a caprice of imagination, which has made the wish the father to the thought, nor on a scheme worked out in his study, but by a laborious examination on the spot, of the routes by which the Pole may be arrived at.

He regards the matter in hand under two distinct aspects: first, there is the scientific question; secondly, the practical question.

At the outset, it is impossible to neglect certain considerations touching the temperature of the Polar regions, although they may be called pure theory. An Italian geometer—the late Signor Pland—made calculations which are looked up to as authority. M. Lambert, not being able to consult them, investigated the matter for himself, with what he considers complete success. He has determined, he says, the

simple laws which govern "insolation," or the quantity of heat thrown by the sun upon different spots of the globe in different latitudes at different hours of the day and in different seasons. Without entering into technical details, a few of the most striking conclusions may be mentioned.

The "power or degree of insolation" at any spot, at a given moment, depends on the angle formed by a vertical line at that spot with a line drawn from it to the sun. This angle is called the zenithal distance. The "power of insolation," however, must not be confounded with the thermometrical effect which is its consequence, but whose intensity depends on a number of other causes—on the nature, for instance, of the atmospheric stratum which envelops the earth like a mantle of down.

The integral calculus enabled M. Lambert to find the mean power of insolation for every day. After long wanderings in an algebraic labyrinth, he discovered simple rules, giving him sets of figures, a glance at which shows that they explain themselves, rendering all commentary needless. A few of the facts the figures tell us are these:

Towards the 22nd of June—the time of the summer solstice—the power of insolation is greater and greater as we proceed from the Arctic Circle up to the Pole, *where it is noon all day long*. The importance of this fact will become apparent when we remember that, *at that time of the year*, the sun throws as much heat on the North Pole as on places situated in the latitudes of 59 degrees north and 25 degrees south: that is to say, as much as on Stockholm and Christiania in the northern hemisphere, and on the Canary Islands in the southern, *at the same time of year*. That calculation, however, does not imply that the midsummer temperature of the North Pole is the same as the temperature at 59 degrees north and 25 degrees south at the same date; because in the latter cases a great amount of heat has been already stored. Travellers will tell you something about the summer temperature of Stockholm and the winter climate of Teneriffe. It is not supposed that the Polar climate at any season resembles them. But the figures are unquestionably curious and significant.

About the 22nd of May and the 22nd of July the degrees of insolation, equal to that of the Pole, are found at 66 degrees north and 33 degrees south: say in an Iceland summer and a Cape of Good Hope winter. About the 22nd of April and the 22nd of August they are 78 degrees north and 57 degrees south, corresponding to a Spitzbergen summer and a Cape Horn winter. Finally, at the equinoxes, about the 22nd of March and the 22nd of September, the North Pole receives no heat. On the contrary, it loses by radiation that which it had absorbed during the summer months. These figures, however, are held to prove that the Polar Sea is not constantly covered with a coating of perennial ice, but that, during the sunshiny season, it is possible for ships to navigate it.

In 1827, Captain Parry and Lieutenant Ross,

believing in the existence of a continuous icy crust, attempted to reach the Pole in sledges, by starting from the north-west of Spitzbergen. Their great moral and physical energy were, unfortunately, exerted in vain; the drifting of the ice caused them to lose every inch of the progress they made. They went backward while advancing forward. But for this circumstance, the space they travelled over was sufficient to bring them to the Pole. There consequently existed a strong current running from north to south, with a sufficient depth of water to float large icebergs.

The very failure of Parry's attempt is one of the most convincing proofs of an open Polar Sea, since it demonstrates a strong current in a southerly direction. An ocean current cannot *issue* from land. It may sweep round a promontory, follow the inflections of a coast, or be split in two by an island or a cape; but it cannot flow out of a solid wall. Towards the South Pole, where an Antarctic continent exists, the only voyage which merits serious consideration—Ross's—mentions no current running from the south to the north. Parry, in his report, expresses regret that he did not try to get his ship through the fissures and gaps in the field of ice which carried his sledges southward, while they were pushing to the north.

Icebergs have also their tale to tell. An iceberg is a glacier set afloat. When a coast presents slopes suitable for the formation of glaciers (which requires an inclination neither too steep nor too flat), the accumulated snow and ice eventually form a compact mass. The infiltrations between this and the surface of the soil, convert the latter into a perfect slide, and the glacier is launched from the cliff into the water, exactly like a ship from the stocks. If the chain of the Alps, for instance, were surrounded by a sea, it is certain that that sea would be bordered by a colossal framework of ice similar to that which girdles the South Pole, and also to that which fringes Greenland, and is found along the coasts of the extreme north of Europe.

The specific gravity of floating ice causes the depth of the portion immersed, to be about double the height which appears above water; but with large icebergs, in consequence of the mode of their formation and the considerable admixture of stones and sand, the respective depths of emersion and immersion may be taken in the proportion of one to six, instead of one to three. Consequently, the enormous icebergs which tower a hundred yards above the water's edge, may be reckoned to have a total altitude of six or seven hundred yards. It is evident that the water in which such colossal icebergs float, must be deep.

When, on the contrary, ice is formed on the spot, on the surface of the sea, by the accumulation of broken-up fields of ice and snow—a curious spectacle to see, for those who know how to use their eyes—such ice cannot attain any great altitude; on the other hand, it extends itself over vast superficial areas. The

presence, therefore, of lofty permanent ice at any point, attests the neighbourhood of glacier-forming land; whereas ice of great superficial extent, but of trifling altitude, implies the existence of a vast open sea. If tall icebergs be mingled with these low fields of ice, they are brought there by currents, sometimes from a considerable distance. They may be compared to vessels left to take their own course, and running ahead before the prevailing wind.

Now, in the Arctic Ocean, to the north of Behring's Strait, the only ice seen does not rise more than a yard or two above the surface of the water, while its extent is sometimes several miles square. This announces a vast open sea without any land, except stumpy islets, such as Herald Island and Plover Island, the last known summits which rise above the surface of the Polar Sea.

On the other hand, round the South Pole, Ross found and traversed a girdle of ice of colossal altitude, indicating (together with the absence of currents to the north) glacier-producing land, and probably a compact and mountainous continent. It follows that—land being less favourable than water to the transformation of heat of insolation into thermometrical heat—the South Pole ought to be colder than the North, in spite of the theoretical equality of their insolation.

A glance at the map of North America shows that Baffin's Bay separates Greenland from the American continent, and from the groups of islands to the north of it. This bay communicates with several straits, one of which, Smith's Strait, runs almost north and south. In this channel, about a third of the way up and to the right, is Peabody Bay, to the south of which, in Rensselaer Harbour, Elisha Kane, the American navigator, with seventeen companions, passed a couple of winters. In the month of June, 1855, Morton, the most able-bodied of his enfeebled crew, accompanied by a Greenland, travelled directly northward in a sledge. Arrived at the extremity of Smith's Strait, he climbed a steep mountain on its western coast. From thence, on reaching an elevation of several hundred feet, *he beheld an open sea, free from ice*. The scanty vegetation of the spot, compared with that found in lower latitudes, indicated a notable mitigation of the temperature. After planting the American flag on Cape Constitution, the most northerly point yet reached by man, Morton returned to his companions completely exhausted. It was not until the following year, after their second winter, that Kane and his surviving friends were taken on board a Danish vessel, not a day too soon.

In 1865, Captain Osborn, who had already taken part in two Arctic expeditions in search of Franklin, communicated to the London Geographical Society his project of reaching the North Pole. In his opinion, the continuous icy crust covering the whole of the Polar area, may be taken for granted, in spite of Parry's doubts. The supposed open sea caught sight of by Morton was nothing but a large gap or

fissure temporarily opened in the great Polar ice-field. With this conviction, he advised, following the route by Greenland, to sail up Smith's Strait as far as possible, and thence proceed to the Pole by sledge. The space to be so traversed scarcely exceeds six hundred and sixty miles. Greater distances, under conditions of no less difficulty, have not repulsed adventurous explorers. A fresh attempt must necessarily be crowned, sooner or later, with success.

This scheme obtained the suffrages of the Geographical Society; other learned societies, as the Royal and the Linnæan, expressed their cordial approbation. From this stage of a project to putting it into execution, in England, there is but a step; and it would, perhaps, have been carried out immediately, but for Dr. Petermann's counter-project,* which was to follow the Gulf Stream along the west coast of Nova Zembla to the east of the Spitzbergen group. According to him, the Pole might be reached in that way without having to quit the ship. Dr. Petermann believed in an open sea. His opinion was supported by Admirals Belcher and Ommaney, General Sabine, and Captain Inglefield. This would be far preferable to reaching the Pole in sledges, which mode of travelling would render a hasty return necessary and unavoidable.

In fact, the real object is not merely to reach the spot where all the meridians cross each other—and where, consequently, it is always exactly nothing o'clock—but to investigate natural laws under exceptional circumstances. Although M. Lambert considers a stay of several months sufficient to settle a number of important questions, his great wish is to spend a whole winter at the very Pole, on board a well-provisioned and suitably fitted ship. Such a winter, he thinks, would not prove too much for human strength and resolution. Men possessing solid information, imbued with the knowledge of scientific laws, able to use their eyes effectively in observing what is passing around them (a rarer faculty than is generally supposed), would bring home with them records of great interest with reference to more than one subject of information.

M. Lambert holds that the fixed idea of a Polar navigator should be *to avoid the land*. It is this idea which causes him to persist in preferring the way of Behring's Strait. He undertakes—as far as an assertion of the kind may be allowed to issue from the mouth of man, when we remember the lion's share which "The Unforeseen" often obtains in human events—he undertakes to reach the North Pole in a ship, and the South Pole in a sledge or other mode of land locomotion. In the latter case, it is possible that deep lochs or fiords running into the land may permit vessels to approach within a short distance of the object in view.

* This gentleman has subscribed one hundred francs towards M. Lambert's expedition, accompanying the gift by a letter of hearty encouragement.

The only hypothesis adverse and disastrous to an expedition by Behring's Strait, would be a continued line of shoals impassable by ships, and accelerating, by the shallowness of their bed, the rapidity of southerly currents. The presence of packed or field ice need not stop the navigator. It can be blown up with gunpowder, and the ship's course traced at will across the ice-field! M. Lambert would regret exceedingly that this idea should be regarded as an idle boast.

Granting, then, a mitigation of cold in the Polar zones, based on the laws of insolation—granting the probability or the certainty of an open sea in the North Polar zone, based on the practical observation of the currents and the ice—granting the consequent possibility of reaching the North Pole in a ship—granting the preferability of Behring's Strait, by reason of the absence of glacier-lands and lofty icebergs—all that remains is to collect the funds necessary to start the enterprise.

To obtain these funds, M. Lambert is trying to form a North Pole Partnership Company, whose advanced capital is to be refunded entirely or partially by the capture of whales. With a disinterested and voluntary subscription of eight hundred thousand francs (thirty-two thousand pounds) paid up, he might set to work; but he has little hope of obtaining so large a sum in that way. "It would be a glorious thing, in truth!" he exclaims. "What a spectacle such a movement would afford! Those French, who are said to be incapable of acting for themselves as a nation, what an example they would offer to the world! But it is too glorious not to be a dream! "Ha! If it were not a dream, the campaign would be magnificent! I should clear Behring's Strait by the beginning of July—it would be a mistake to penetrate earlier into the Arctic Ocean; by making straight for the north, holding a little to the west, I should fall upon the grand Polar ice-field, after traversing several secondary fields; and unhesitatingly blasting the ice with gunpowder, and sailing over its fragments in my strong-stemmed ship, I should moor a buoy bearing the flag of France on the 90th degree of latitude, before the end of August!"

LOISETTE.

It was a divine May morning when I set out to walk to Summerfield, and I felt more hopeful of success than I had ever done before. I had determined that that day should decide my fate. All through the winter and the early spring I had loved Loiset, and a hundred times I had longed and yearned to tell her so, and to ask her to be my wife, and each time something—I could hardly say what—struck me silent.

She liked me, I knew, but did she love me? Something in her eyes seemed to lead me to hope she did; such eyes they were, loving, and tender, and shy. When I looked into their

soft depths, all the most delightful descriptions of eyes I had ever read used to come across me, "*les portes de l'amour*," "*des bluets doux comme les yeux*;" above all, Calderon's tender refrain,

Sweetest eyes were ever seen.

When she looked at me with those eyes, then it seemed to me I might "tell her all that was in my heart," and take her to mine unforbidden. But the next moment, as if she guessed and half feared my thought, she turned away slyly, and her manner altered, and my heart shrunk back in fear and sorrow.

But at last I felt I could endure this suspense no longer. I must know the best or the worst. If she were to be mine, such a home and such a life as I had planned, and hoped, and dreamt of ever since I first knew her, should be prepared; if she were not for me, then I should leave England, and break away from that and all other home-ties, and try to bear it like a man somewhere away from all that should unman me.

But that May-day, as I started forth and walked along briskly through the up and down lanes of the lovely Hertfordshire country; now, shut in between banks tufted with ferns, over-run with the exquisite small-leaved ivy, crowned with lavish May; now, emerging upon sweeps of hill and dips of valley, crossing commons ablaze with gorse, traversing woodland paths where bluebells spread their sheets of azure, and lingering primroses starred mossy banks; Heaven! how I remember it all! That May-day hope seemed as strong and as full of spring and life and vigour, as my own limbs. I strode on, thinking of the eyes that would look up their soft welcome to mine, and of the warm little hand that I should clasp, and perhaps then claim as mine, my very own, while life should last. It seemed to me that such feelings could not but be prophetic.

"If I find her in the garden," I thought, "I will look upon it as a good omen; I will not let the time go by, I will seize the opportunity and speak to her at once."

I got to the cottage and opened the garden gate. As I stepped inside I saw her, a little way down the path, in her dainty morning gown and broad garden hat, filling the basket that hung on her arm, with flowers, and softly singing to herself. I stopped on the lawn; I wanted to come upon her unawares, and test the effect of my sudden appearance, which I could not do if the sound of my foot on the gravel should betray my approach: thus I got close to her before she knew I was near. She started violently, and the colour rushed to her cheek. The slightest thing would bring it—I have seen her flush at the sudden rising of a bird from the thicket. The next moment she smiled and held out her hand. "Oh, it is you! You startled me. I had no idea anybody was near," and the sweet eyes were raised to mine trustingly. "Won't you come in?"

"Not if I may stay out—unless you are tired?"

"Oh no, I am never tired of being in the garden. So you'll help me to gather my flowers; see, you can reach up to those sprays of honeysuckle; get some of the best, the rosiest, for me."

"Ah, how delicious!" she said, inhaling the fragrance with deep ecstatic inspirations, and she held up to me the blossom that had just touched her face. I kissed the flower; I took the hand that held it; I told her all I had to tell. She stood still, her head bent so that the hat hid her face from me, and I knew not in what spirit she listened till a sigh that was half a sob checked me.

She looked up with a face so full of pain, of pity, of perplexity, of deprecating appeal, that though the hope in my heart sank down, I almost felt more for the sorrow in her face than for that in my own soul.

"Forgive me," she said. "I am so grieved. I ought to have told you. I did not know that you—that you cared for me *that* way. I have been engaged these two years. He is in India, and coming back in August. Oh, you don't think I have been coquettish—that I have been knowingly leading you on to this—*do* you?" In her earnestness she laid her hand on mine, and lifted her face with a tremulous mouth, and eyes brimful of tears.

If I had died for it, I must have snatched the consolation the moment offered—the last, the only one. I drew her on my heart, holding her close, close; and I stilled the quivering of the lips with twenty kisses.

When I released her, she turned her back to me, hid her face in her hands, and sobbed till her frame shook.

"Loisette, Loisette, forgive me! I could not help it! I swear I could not help it, Loisette!"

She shook her head.

"Loisette, think how I love you; think what I feel in knowing all the hope I had of you is gone—gone for ever! Loisette, I am going away, where I can never offend you more. Think that what I have done was done in parting with you for the last time—a last farewell, Loisette."

She tried to speak, but sobs made her inarticulate, still I knew she was bitterly reproaching me.

"Yes; I know I have no right to expect forgiveness. I will go. I won't distress you further. But we have at least been friends, dear, and you cannot think of that, and let me go for ever, without one word."

Still she was silent. I paused and waited; then I flung up my arms, as a man does who has lost all; and with a great groan I turned to leave her. I heard her move, I heard her attempt to speak, and I looked back. Her face was still averted, still covered with one hand. But the other was held out to me, and springing back I took it reverently, and bent my lips upon it.

"God for ever bless you, Loisetle, the one and only woman in His earth for me!"

"And God bless you, and comfort you," she said. "I wish I could have been a better friend to you—I meant to be. Always believe that."

"I will, I do."

And so Loisetle and I parted. The May morning was darkened as I passed through the garden gate again. I turned my steps I knew not whither—away, away, where no one could see me. That was the only wish or instinct I had.

I walked miles, seeking rest, and finding none. At last I stopped at a gate, and leaned my arms on it, and looked blindly over the wide landscape spread before me.

As I gazed, a dull numbness fell on my sorrow, and my perceptions of outward objects slowly returned.

I watched some children gathering blossoms of the May, and thought what a pity it was they should tear the boughs down so, and destroy so much to secure so little. I watched a stealthy cat creeping through the long undulations of the grass, on the hunt for the poor little tender young rabbits. Up sprang a lark, bursting into ripples of song, and my eye followed him, rising, hovering, rising again, pausing, balancing on the wing, soaring up once more, darting away obliquely, resting awhile, but always singing—singing as if he could not cease for his life—then dashing down like a stone and vanishing.

And then my great grief seized me once more, and I dropped on the turf and hid my face in my arms, and cried as I had never cried since I was a boy, when my mother died, and when I thought the world held no more happiness for me.

When our great griefs fall on us, we treat them as boys do bonfires. It seems that they cannot burn fiercely enough; we heap on them everything that comes to our hand in the way of fuel; all the tenderest recollections, all the sweetest hopes, all the most blessed anticipations, that made the joy and glory of our lives—that were as wings, lifting us above the earth we trod on. All these are brought out from the storehouse of memory and thrown on the pile, making it blaze with inextinguishable fury, or what seems to us so, and we feel a bitter relish in the anguish, and seek to make it more, rather than less, as we stir the heap into fiercer conflagration.

Ah me! Ah me! what a miserable fool I had been, and how was I punished!

I had thought, when in my hopefulness that morning I had contemplated the whole affair, that I had been prepared for this possibility, and could bear it. But, strangely, it had never entered into my calculations that if Loisetle were not for me, it could be that she was promised to another; *there* was the sting, the thing so impossible to endure without every fibre of my heart being torn by the agonies of jealousy, in addition to grief. Loisetle engaged, Loisetle with no love for me, all her love for another! Loisetle thinking of him, writing

to him, calling him all those tender names that lips like hers seemed made to utter! And in August—in three months—he was coming back, doubtless to claim his bride!

At that thought I sprang up, as if a serpent had arisen from the green turf and stung me. I started away so far that it was not till dark that, utterly worn out and exhausted, I reached home. I shall never forget that night, nor the waking in the morning, after a couple of hours' dead sleep.

That day I wrote to my cousin, Sir Edward Haldane, who had just been appointed governor of New Brunswick, to offer myself as his private secretary: a post he had suggested my taking when his nomination to the place had first been talked of. The answer came. He would be delighted; in less than a fortnight I left England.

"I am so grieved," Mrs. Hamilton had written before this, "so grieved in every way." I had not been wrong, then, in fancying I had had her good wishes. "I should have been so glad to have bidden you God speed by word of mouth before you went, but I feel I ought not to ask you to come. Anyway, you have our best wishes, now and ever." Not a word from Loisetle. Well, better so. What could she say?

I often look back now on my sojourn in that black miserable raw colony, ice-bound for half the year, sun-scorched for a few weeks, with something like a shudder.

The great cold staring barrack of a Government House, with its flat unshaded gardens; the unpicturesque village that was the seat of government, and prided itself accordingly; the country that was nothing but dense forest, bare clearing, studded with blackened stumps or quaking morass! The interminable winter, white, still, silent, fettered with a frost that was unrelenting as death, that chilled the blood and nipped the flesh into blains, and checked the current of life in the veins of childhood, of age, and of all tender beings!

Oh, the desolation of those winter forests! No tongue can tell it! No breeze, no voice of bird, no rustle of leaf, no colour; a broad white floor, a hard blue roof, black stiff iron trees standing up motionless and stark. All so like my own life in desolateness! only this nature felt no pain!

I stayed there till the sickly tardy spring, often driven back by fresh snow-falls, came to loosen the spell that winter had laid on the suffering land, and then I resolved to bear it no longer, and, come what might, to return to England, and learn tidings of Loisetle. It seemed to me that anything would be more endurable than this dead silence regarding her.

So I turned my back on New Brunswick for evermore, and reached England in March; March, wild and gusty, but at least alive with birds singing, and grass and buds upshooting in field and hedgerow.

I went at once into Hertfordshire. I dared not go to Mrs. Hamilton's; I dared not ask

anything about the family, lest I should learn what I had come there to know.

I wandered about among the lanes where we used to wander, hoping, dreading, longing, oh, how intensely! At last I came upon Loisetette and her sister. I did not meet them, but a turn of the road brought me in sight of them, walking slowly before me. Loisetette, Loisetette! Just as of old, the undulating figure, the head now bent pensively, now poised lightly on the white flexible throat, the shining masses of hair coiled below the quiet little black hat. O Loisetette, Loisetette! How my heart went out to you! Loisetette, my love! Loisetette, my darling!

I hastened my steps: I *must* see her once more, must look into her eyes, must hear the tones of her voice, let the cost be what it would.

As I approached, she turned with a start, a look half expectant, half alarmed; she felt who was coming, and the blood rushed over face and neck and brow. Mrs. Hamilton, following her sister's movement, was the first to speak; she came forward, both hands extended, with joyous welcome; then Loisetette greeted me with shy kindness, passed to the other side of her sister, and walked on silently: while Mrs. Hamilton questioned me as to my travels, my movements, my plans.

"You'll come and see us, you will promise? I know you are a man of your word, and that if you promise, you will keep your word. Come and dine to-morrow, will you?"

I promised. I could not be more miserable than I was, and I must learn all I wanted to know. But I would not go to dinner; I remembered too well the last time I had dined there, so I said I would go in the morning.

When I entered the drawing-room, what a rush of memories at sight of the familiar place, of the two women sitting by the fire as they had a year ago—all but I, apparently unchanged!

I know not how it all came about, but in a few minutes I found myself making one in the circle as of old. I could not speak. Loisetette, too, was silent. Mrs. Hamilton talked for us all.

Presently she glanced at the clock on the mantelpiece. "Three already! You *must* excuse me. Dear! I shall barely be in time to meet Mrs. L. at the station. You won't go, or I shall think you are offended. When shall we see you again? Settle it with Loisetette. Good-bye. No, à revoir!" And she was gone, and Loisetette and I were sitting side by side, silent.

Loisetette was sitting, very pale and calm, looking into the fire.

"Loisetette!"

She gave an almost imperceptible start, her colour rose slightly, and she turned her eyes on me for a moment—I could not tell whether in reproach or mere surprise—and then resumed her gaze on the fire.

"Miss Vane—are you still Miss Vane?"

"Yes."

"When—how long—?" I could not find words in which to put the question.

"When am I going to be married? you would ask," she said, with a calm that was almost rigid. "I am not going to be married. I have been jilted."

"You jilted, Loisetette!"

"Do you pity me? Don't. I am glad of it; glad, at least, to be free; glad that I have nothing to blame myself for, in obtaining my freedom. Long before I gained it I felt we had made a mistake, and while I was thinking of how I might suggest the idea to—to him, he cut the knot by marrying a half-caste damsel with several lakhs of rupees. Though what sort of a fortune that may be, I have not the faintest conception." A faint gleam of the old sweet archness came across her face.

I bent forward, looking with all my heart in my eyes on the soft half-averted profile, watching the conscious blood rising slowly. I laid my hand on the little cold rigidly clasped hands; I felt them relaxing; gently my arm wound itself round her waist; her head dropped on my shoulder, nestled there, and was still.

So we sat, until the pony-carriage stopped at the gate. Mrs. Hamilton came in in a somewhat demonstrative manner. She glanced at Loisetette, then at me, and understood it all.

"So you bore my absence with what equanimity you might!" she said, lifting her bright face to mine, with a world of congratulation in her eyes. "Now you'll stay to dinner."

Loisetette turned and fled.

"God bless you, you dear woman!" I said.

"I never expected to be so glad to get rid of you as I was an hour ago."

"And God bless *you*! It was *you* I wanted for a brother all along. I always hated the notion of Loisetette marrying that man. Poor child, she did not know her own heart, and was persuaded into accepting him! If she had listened to me, she would have thrown him over long ago; but she was too conscientious while she thought he loved her. Perhaps it's better as it is? I will tell you something. She knows there is no mistake this time."

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BOOK V.

CHAPTER IX. CLEMENT UNDERSTANDS WHY THE LOCK WAS OILED.

It was barely nine o'clock on that same bright summer Sunday evening of which I have written in my last chapter, when Clement Charlewood reached his home. But Walter was already in bed.

"He went up-stairs half an hour ago," said Penelope, "and locked his door. I wanted a book that he had carried to his room, and knocked at his door to ask for it, but he would not answer for a long time, and at last called out that he was in bed, and that it was useless to knock and disturb him, for he should make it a rule not to take any notice of such interruptions. Civil, wasn't it?"

"It is very strange," said Clement, thoughtfully. "Watty was always pettish and quick tempered, but it seems to me that his disposition is changing lately into moroseness and brutality. This freak of shutting himself up in his own room, too, is unlike his old self."

The brother and sister chatted together some time longer. Clement said a few words to his sister about his chance meeting with little Corda; but he did not, in repeating what the child had said, mention Mabel's name. It seemed impossible to him to talk about her, even to Penelope. He was sure of Penny's fullest sympathy for himself, but the risk of provoking a sharp word against *her* involved too painful a possibility.

Long before twelve o'clock all was profoundly quiet in the little household at Barnsbury. Mrs. Charlewood was with her daughter in Mayfair. The little servant had gone home to sleep. Clement and his sister had supped quietly and had retired to rest. A little after midnight, Penelope, who slept lightly, raised herself on her elbow to listen to an unusual sound in the basement story.

"It is just as though some one were trying the street door," she said to herself. Then she listened more intently. For a few minutes all was still, then again came the sound. This time it was unmistakably the noise made by a key in the lock of the street door. Penny promptly wrapped a shawl round her shoulders,

thrust her feet into slippers, and ran softly and swiftly to Clement's door.

"Clem!" she cried, "Clem, get up for an instant. There's an odd noise down-stairs. I'm not desperately frightened, but I should like to satisfy myself what it is. I will wait for you on the stairs."

She stood still, looking out of the staircase window into the darkness, and in a few minutes her brother joined her.

"What is it?" he asked, almost in a whisper.

"Some one tampering with the lock of the house door. Hush! There again! Don't you hear it?"

"Yes; I hear it distinctly enough, but I don't think there can be any cause for alarm. I secured the fastening myself. Besides, house-breakers don't come to one's door and announce themselves in that way, and Heaven knows we have little to tempt thieves. However, we will see what it is."

As he spoke, he struck a match and lit a candle. The noise down-stairs grew louder. A key was being violently moved about in the lock, and the door shook and rattled.

"Shall I call Walter?" asked Penelope.

"Yes," answered her brother, after a moment's thought; "call him."

She knocked loudly at Walter's door, calling him at the same time by name, and urging him to rise. There was no response.

"If the house were on fire, Wat would infallibly be burnt in his bed," muttered Penelope, running down-stairs. Clement was already in the passage, and the noise without had ceased. Penelope took the candle and held it whilst her brother undid the fastenings of the door. As soon as it was opened, a man pushed into the passage and staggered against the wall. The flare of the candle fell full upon his face. It was Walter Charlewood. Clement had already raised his hand to repulse the intruder, but, on recognising his brother, stood still, transfixed with surprise. Penelope gave a great start, but uttered no sound, and the three remained for some seconds silent and motionless.

"Where's my mother?" demanded Walter, at length, glaring wildly at the others. His face was pale, his hair dishevelled, his dress disordered. He spoke thickly and huskily, and leant against the wall behind him to support himself.

"Walter!" cried Clement, fixing his eyes upon his brother's face, "can I believe my senses!

You here? *You*, whom we supposed to be asleep in your room hours ago, stealing into your home like a thief in the night! Oh, Wat, Wat! Why is this? What have we done that you should bring this sorrow and shame on us?"

Walter only replied by an oath, and folding his arms across his breast, looked doggedly at his brother.

"Clem," whispered Penelope, "say no more to him at present. The wretched boy is not himself. You see he has added drinking to the list of his vices. Let him get to rest now, and to-morrow we can speak to him more calmly."

"Thank God," murmured Clement, "that my mother is not here."

"Ah, Clem," said Penelope, with a sigh, "I hardly dare to say what I suspect, but I greatly fear that my poor mother has witnessed similar scenes often before, when you and I supposed her to be peacefully at rest. Heaven help her—and us!"

During this whispered talk, Walter had stood leaning against the wall, swaying to and fro, and frowning and biting his white lips. Now he looked up defiantly, and said: "Are we to stay here all night? Or do you mean to allow me to pass you, and go to bed?"

Without a word, Clement drew aside, and Walter, with a visible effort, straightened himself and walked to the stairs. He stumbled and staggered as he began to mount them, and Penelope covered her eyes with her hand, to shut out the humiliating spectacle. They heard him open the door of his chamber and enter it.

"His own door was locked, you see, and he had the key with him," said Penny. Clement examined the street door. There was a latch-key remaining in the lock outside, but, owing to the inside fastenings having been secured, Walter had not been able to gain access to the house. Clement took possession of the latch-key, made all secure once more, and then turned and looked at his sister. Their eyes met, and Penelope, with a sudden impulse, seized her brother's hand and kissed it. "Oh, Clem, my dearest brother, such a return for your generous forbearance! Such a reward for your patient striving to shield and save him!"

Clement wrung her hand hard, but his face was still and stern: "Get to bed, dear," he said. "Try to sleep, Penny. There is to-morrow to come."

They parted and went to rest. All was again silent in the little house, except the loud ticking of a clock in the kitchen. But though there was silence, there was not peace. Walter had fallen almost immediately into a heavy slumber, and his sister heard him breathing stertorously as she lay in the chamber over his. But Clement sat half dressed, as he was revolving many thoughts in his mind, until daybreak; and Penelope lay wakeful and anxious in her bed, starting if a board creaked, straining her ears to listen to every sound; and when at length she fell into an uneasy sleep, it was peopled with painful images.

A ray of bright sunshine falling on her face awoke her in the morning, and she started up with that vague feeling which most people have experienced on awaking after some sorrow or disaster; a consciousness of distress combined with a lurking hope that it will prove to have been all a dream.

It was no dream, however, as poor Penelope acknowledged to herself presently. She dressed quickly, and went down to the kitchen. It was yet so early that the little servant had not arrived. Penelope opened the shutters, lit a fire, and began to prepare the breakfast. While she was thus occupied, Clement joined her.

"My poor boy!" she cried, seeing his haggard face, "you look as if you had been dead and buried since yesterday."

"If it were not for you and mother, I should say no matter how soon I *am* dead and buried, Penny. It's weary work. Everything that I set my heart on seems to crumble into dust."

He stood at the kitchen window, looking out on to the dreary crockery-bestrewn field, with its patches of rank grass, and its tall gibbet-like posts, with their announcement respecting "this eligible plot of building ground," blistering in the sunshine. His sister was silent. She knew that no words of hers would sweeten the bitterness that was in his heart; but she had faith in him, and knew that the natural ebullition of hurt angry feeling would leave him still brave, honest, and true-hearted at the core. By-and-by, when Penny was staggering under the weight of a great kettle she had just filled and brought from the scullery, he took it from her and placed it on the fire. As he did so, his eyes fell on her hands, discoloured, coarse, and dragged out of shape.

"Poor Penny," he murmured absently, "how your hands are spoiled. They used to be so white and pretty."

The words touched some little feminine chord in her heart. Tears, that real deep grief could rarely wring from her, sprang into her eyes. She bent her head over the fire to hide them, but they dropped and dropped more and more thickly, until she covered her eyes with her hands, and, sinking into a chair, sobbed aloud. Her brother came to her, stroked her hair, and spoke soothingly, but she continued to weep for some time. At last the paroxysm wore itself out, and she wiped her eyes and composed her countenance.

"I hope you don't really suppose that I was crying in that idiotic manner over the departed beauty of my hands, eh, Clem? Because, however appearances may be against me, I have not yet reached *that* pitch of imbecility. But what you said seemed just to—to bring all kinds of troubles so vividly before my mind again, that—that—but I don't often indulge you in this fashion, do I?"

"You're the best and bravest girl in the world, Penny."

"No, I'm not; but I like to hear you say so. Now, whilst we are waiting for the kettle to boil, would you mind telling me, Clement, what

course you think of pursuing with that wretched degraded boy up-stairs?"

Penelope's face grew very hard as she spoke of Walter.

Clement had been thinking of little else during all those weary hours, and had shaped a plan in his mind, which he now proceeded to unfold to his sister.

Before the Charlewoods had left Hammerham, and whilst Clement's plans were yet undecided, old Stephens, the chief clerk who had grown grey in the service of the firm, had made some proffers of assistance to his young master. They were made with a good deal of hesitation, and with more delicacy than a cursory acquaintance with the brusque-dry-mannered Hammerham clerk might have led one to anticipate. He had first, in a somewhat roundabout fashion, offered to supply the family with any ready money of which they might stand in need. On Clement's earnest and grateful assurance that such assistance was not necessary, Stephens had then broached a project, which he thought promised well for Clement's future career. The old clerk had a brother who had been settled for many years at Rio Janeiro, and was a wealthy thriving merchant there. "He's quite a great man there, is George," said Stephens, "and he hasn't forgotten old times nor old friends either, as great men do sometimes. If I was to write half a line to George he'd be proud and glad to have you in his counting-house, Mr. Clem, you may take my word for that, sir. Now, you needn't to shake your head and smile, Mr. Clem. George was once a very poor helpless bit of a lad, not knowing quite certainly where next day's dinner was to come from; and the governor—Mr. Charlewood, sir"—the old man's voice grew husky, and he turned away his head—"well, sir, our governor, he gave him a helping hand. He knew the value of his money, did the governor, in those days, Mr. Clem, and he wasn't one to make ducks and drakes of it for the sake of making a flourish of generosity; but he gave George a helping hand, sir; he *did*. The lad had a chance of a good berth out in those foreign parts, but he was too poor to take advantage of it, and, to make a long story short, Mr. Clem, the governor rigged him out with a good outfit, and gave him a pound or two in his pocket, and set him afloat. And that was the beginning of George's fortune, and if you asked him he'd tell you the same, sir. It's five-and-twenty years ago, Mr. Clem; you were a toddling little chap in petticoats at the time. And I don't say but that the money was all paid back honourably, many a long year ago. But there's some things that ought never to be forgotten if it was a thousand years. And I've never forgotten *that*, Mr. Clem; no more has George, either."

Had Clement been alone in the world, he would doubtless have accepted the old clerk's offer, and have tried his fortune abroad. But it would have been out of the question to take his mother and sister with him on such a venture, and he could not make up his mind to leave

them. Besides, there was Walter, and the promise he had made to his father respecting him. So, considerably to Stephens's disappointment, the idea was abandoned, and Clement, as we have seen, obtained a situation in the house of Messrs. M'Culloch and Co., a building firm in London. But in his painful and anxious meditations about his brother, the recollection of Stephens's proposal had flashed on Clement's mind, and had seemed to offer a ray of hope, and a possible career for Walter, far away from the evil influences which appeared to surround him in England.

"It's only a very great deal too good for him," muttered Penelope, whose face, nevertheless, grew brighter as she listened to her brother.

"Whether it is good or bad for him—whether anything can be good for him any more, infatuated boy—remains to be seen, Penny. But I think it is the only chance left for him. Of course we must tell Stephens the truth, painful though it may be. We cannot let him send Walter to his brother's counting-house on any false pretences. We must ask that he may be received on trial, and as a favour for which we should all be deeply grateful."

Penelope Charlewood—although all that was fine in her nature had ripened and mellowed under adversity—had not entirely freed herself from the influences of many years passed in money-worship, and amongst money-worshippers.

"It does seem hard," she said, half aloud, and with the steely glitter in her eyes—"it does seem *very* hard to have to ask a favour—and such a favour—from old Stephens!"

Clement looked at her reproachfully.

"The occasion of our asking the favour is hard enough, Penny," he said. "But surely it is good to know —"

"Oh yes, yes," she broke in, hastily. "I know it all, every bit. It's good to have a faithful friend, even though he be a Hammerham hired clerk, who wears high-lows and white cotton stockings. It's perfectly true, and I'm a good-for-nothing ungrateful creature. But, Clem, I *can't* get up to your moral altitudes, and it's no use trying. I only get a kind of moral crick in the neck by straining upwards. I suppose there is no hope of Wat doing any good here?"

"I fear, none. I thought when I got him to return to our home that he would be comparatively safe, and under my own eye. But the discovery of last night has shown me that things are ten times worse than before. You see, there is no doubt that poor mother, in her weak affection, has connived at the vile deception, the practical lie, that Walter has been acting all this time. We can't deny that to ourselves."

Penny bit her lips, and checked an angry exclamation.

"When I think," she cried, "of her stealing down tremblingly night after night to unfasten the bolts, so that he might enter undiscovered with his key. Ah, poor mother, poor mother!"

"Yes, Penny; poor mother. She has been

terribly misled by her indulgent love for Walter. But it is useless to say more on that head. One thing clearly results from this discovery, that there is no safety for Walter or for any of us so long as he remains at home."

Before the little servant rang to be admitted, Clement and Penelope had breakfasted, and had agreed that it would be well for the former to have an interview alone with Walter before going to his office.

CHAPTER X. SECRET SERVICE.

CHANCE had brought Mrs. Hutchins again into contact with the Trescotts. Her lodger, Mr. Shaw, was engaged at the same theatre with Mr. Trescott, and had renewed his acquaintance with Corda. Lingo's protecting regard for the little girl had, Jerry Shaw maintained, influenced his master in her favour. "We often talk of the time at Kilclare," said Jerry to Mr. Trescott, with inscrutable gravity, "and Lingo has always the kind word for your little white colleen."

With Corda's father and brother, Mr. Shaw steadily refused to form any close acquaintance. Alfred, indeed, would have contemptuously rejected all advances towards intimacy on the part of Jerry Shaw, had any such been made. If he had any feeling at all for the old man, it was dislike. But Jerry troubled neither father nor son, and limited his attention strictly to Corda. He would escort the child on long excursions into the country. They usually proceeded in the following manner. Corda was put into an omnibus, bound for some distant outskirt of London. Mr. Shaw would mount on to the top, and Lingo, if disposed for much exercise, would run by the side of the vehicle. Arrived at their destination, Mr. Shaw and his young companion would alight, and strike across some pleasant path through the fields, or along a pretty high road, bordered with tangled hedges, and with a rustic inn or dwelling-house here and there breaking its monotony. Lingo trotted before them or beside them, or sometimes walked solemnly at their heels with a responsible air. These walks were very pleasant to Corda. She and her oddly-matched companion chatted together with quaint gravity. Jerry Shaw was well acquainted with the country, and with the hidden treasure-houses of delight and interest to be found in hedgerow, meadow, and coppice. He had wonderful stories to tell of his boyish days in Ireland (for to Corda he had long ceased to deny the land of his birth, as he sometimes chose to do to the rest of the world), of tramps over wide bog and barren mountain, of fishing in sequestered streams, of dangerous boating in the rock-bound bays and creeks of the blue Atlantic, of wild mad gallops over long desolate tracts of country on a half-broken spirited blood horse.

Once Corda had said to him: "Then you must have been rich when you were young, Mr. Shaw, if you had a horse to ride upon." Jerry had thereupon shut his lips as with a spring, and for

an hour had uttered no articulate sound, only the long sniff, which Corda had learned to interpret as a sign of dissatisfaction. But thenceforward the child's instinctive quickness and delicacy made her keen to avoid such occasions of offence. Jerry kept a scrupulously accurate register of the cost of all these excursions, and presented it weekly to Mr. Trescott for the payment of his daughter's share. Jerry was very poor, though, as he often boasted, he and Lingo did not owe a farthing in the world. The weekly account between himself and Mr. Trescott, however, was simply a homage to Corda's feelings. The old man perceived her to be uneasy at the idea that her father should allow her to be a burden on Mr. Shaw's slender purse. Corda was well enough acquainted with poverty to look upon sixpences as serious things; and the payment of her omnibus fare, performed in her presence with much ceremony, was a great relief to her tender conscience, and made her feel free to enjoy the pure air and pleasant rambles thus obtained; but there was no record kept of the cool leaves full of fresh dainty fruit, the bowls of rich milk, and slices of sweet country bread with which Corda was regaled on these occasions.

"I'm a peculiarly greedy old man," Jerry would say, in his jerky manner. "I never can see fresh fruit without wanting to buy some. Same with milk. Did ye ever taste butter-milk? Well, perhaps this is better, but it's a matter of taste, ye know. Ate up the rest of those cherries, Corda machree, and take warning by me. I'm so horribly greedy that when I see 'em, I think I want 'em, and when I've got 'em, divil a one of 'em can I swallow! It's a very bad thing to be greedy. Ate 'em up, colleen bawn."

Mrs. Hutchins's opinion of her lodger was very fluctuating. The rent for his one room was paid with exemplary punctuality, and the room itself was kept in a state of neat cleanliness that was a standing reproach to the slatternly condition of the rest of the house. But Lingo was a subject of unceasing wonder and curiosity in Mrs. Hutchins's mind; and his relations with his master appeared to her so mysterious as to warrant grave doubts whether Mr. Shaw were not some weird magician in disguise, and Lingo his familiar spirit.

"Talk of dogs of Montargis!" Mrs. Hutchins would say, argumentatively. "Show me the dog of Montargis as 'll go to the butcher's for his three-penn'orth of liver, and bring it home in his mouth! I think there's summat queer about the beast. I do raly."

"Something queer," in Mrs. Hutchins's vocabulary, meant something that she did not quite comprehend; and whatever Mrs. Hutchins did not quite comprehend, she invariably supposed to be evil. Mr. Shaw was, however, a favourite with his landlord. His punctuality, his neatness, his honesty, and his taciturnity, recommended themselves favourably to Mr. Hutchins. The latter had himself a great command of silence, which was one of his wife's cherished

grievances; and the dumb nod that passed between him and his lodger whenever they chanced to meet, appeared to be in consonance with Mr. Hutchins's feelings, and to draw him towards old Jerry with an attraction that neither cordiality of manner nor eloquence of speech could have exercised. Jerry's opinion of the saturnine, elf-flocked carpenter, was confidentially expressed to Lingo, and was not unfavourable. "Ay, ay," said he, in the tone of voice that a man uses who is unable to cope with another in argument, but retains a stubborn conviction struggling for utterance, "ay, ay, I know he's not *your* sort. Too dry. No warmth of manner. You're as explosive as a rocket yourself. Touch, and go; and, as I often tell you, your weak point is betraying your feelings. The fact is, you're all wag with your friends." (By which phrase Mr. Shaw intended no reference to Lingo's buoyant sense of humour, but merely alluded to his tail.) "But Hutchins isn't a bad fellow. Any man married to that woman *must* end by being either a mute or a murderer. By George, I'd like to know which you'd have done yourself under the circumstances? Aha!"

Lingo blinked with one eye, gave a lazy thump of his tail on the floor, and, opening his jaws in a prodigious yawn, showed a formidable range of strong yellow teeth, in exceedingly good condition.

"Of coorse ye would!" exclaimed Jerry, triumphantly, and as if he had received the fullest categorical reply. "Of coorse ye would, devil doubt ye!"

This conversation—if the word may be so used, in Jerry's imagination it was decidedly so—was taking place on the Monday succeeding the evening made memorable by Mr. Fluke's charity sermon. Jerry Shaw was seated at the table, spectacles on nose, mending a pair of trousers with great neatness and dexterity, and Lingo lay stretched at his feet. Suddenly the dog pricked up one ear attentively, there came a tap at the door, and the next moment Mr. Hutchins put his head into the room.

"Talk of the——umph!" muttered old Jerry aside to Lingo. Then he nodded at his landlord, and motioned him to enter. Mr. Hutchins peered at his lodger from beneath his tangled black locks with a helpless perplexed expression. He had seen the old man daily for three or four months, and had never yet spoken to him. It appeared to require a great effort to begin. At length, however, he said in a strong Hammerham dialect, "Her's very bad."

"Her! Who?" asked Shaw, looking up.

"The little wench. Cordy they calls her."

Before he had well uttered the words, Jerry had sprung to his feet, and the dog, seeing the sudden movement, ran towards the door in violent excitement.

"Now, now, now," said Jerry, hastily buttoning his coat, "be aisy—be cool. Don't be putting yourself into this state. I know. I'm going. But, take my advice, and lie down for two seconds."

The docile beast obeyed, keeping his intelligent eyes upon his master's face, and obviously ready to leap up again at a moment's notice.

"What's the matter? Who told you?" asked Mr. Shaw.

"Well, it wur the young woman where they lodges. I see her this mornin'. And her says the little wench wur took bad last night, her says. Her's abed now, her says."

The delivery of this address—Mr. Hutchins being almost entirely unaccustomed to private as well as to public speaking—took some time. When it was finished, Mr. Shaw was already making his way down-stairs. Lingo, conscious of some unusual excitement, bounded eagerly before him. Mr. Hutchins opened the street door with his strong workman's hand.

"Her's a—a nice mild little wench," said he, hesitatingly. "Niver blethers nor bounces, *her* doesn't. I wish—I shud like—I——"

"Thank ye," said Jerry, with a sparkle in his stolid grey eye. "I understand. I'll tell her that you asked kindly for her, and send your duty, and hope she'll soon get better."

Mr. Hutchins nodded expressively. Hammerham artisans do not habitually touch their caps to their superiors. Mr. Hutchins, however, made some approach to doing so, by pulling a straggling lock of hair that hung over his eyes. The action was intended to convey his consciousness that the shabby old man, who lodged in his house at the weekly rent of five shillings, and who mended his own trousers, was a gentleman. A fact to the perception of which his wife's finer poetical faculties had not yet attained.

Jerry Shaw, preceded by Lingo, arrived at the Trescotts' lodgings. Mr. Trescott was out. Corda was still in bed. The doctor had just left her. The servant didn't think there was much the matter. Did not know what her illness was. Hoped it was nothing catching. Could not tell whether the child might see anybody, or not. She was alone now.

Mr. Shaw stood hesitating in the narrow passage, and the servant, holding the door in her hand, was trying to edge him out into the street again, when a loud bark from the upper story was followed by the tinkle of a cracked bell.

"Lord bless us!" cried the servant, a low-browed cross-grained woman, "the little gurl's a ringin'. I ain't got time to be nursery-maid."

Jerry silently—he did most things silently—hung his hat and crooked stick on a peg in the passage, and walked softly up-stairs. Corda was still occupying her brother's room. Alfred had not been home since she had fallen ill, and the doctor had desired that for the present, at least, the child should not be moved. The old man stood at the half-open door for a minute, tapped softly, and then went in.

Corda was lying in bed, with one thin blue-veined hand outside the coverlet. Lingo was sitting on his haunches at the bedside, and in this posture his head just attained the level of the little frail hand into which he had thrust his nose. Corda's face was turned towards the door. Her cheeks were flushed, and her large eyes

blazed feverishly. The gold-brown curls were thrown back from her forehead, as though they had heated it.

"Oh, good Mr. Shaw!" she cried, when she saw him, and big bright tears gathered in her eyes, and rolled down her face on to the bed-clothes.

"I knew you were here, because Lingo came up-stairs to tell me. He startled me a little at first by barking, but he didn't know that I must be quiet. When I told him what the doctor said, he was very still and gentle, weren't you, Lingo?"

Lingo's tail, stretched on the floor at right angles with his body, vibrated with suppressed emotion, but he remained otherwise motionless.

"Colleen bawn, this won't do," said Mr. Shaw, abruptly, but in a subdued voice. "What's to become of us, if ye fall sick on our hands, will ye tell me that?"

Corda smiled. "Oh, I am not *very* sick, Mr. Shaw. I shall soon be better. And I am not crying because I'm sorry," added the child, with sensitive apprehension lest he should be hurt, "but because I'm glad to see you. It's de—debility, the doctor says. Do you think it is debility?"

"If the doctor says so, Corda asthore, it's probably—true," replied Jerry, ending his speech with an air of saying something unexpected. "But what knocked you over so suddenly, mavourneen?"

Jerry's lips had been long unused to accents of tenderness, and with their resumption came the familiar phrases of his boyhood. Caressing words that had been crooned into his ear by nurse or mother in the old, old time. Corda looked up at him with solemn searching eyes, eyes that had *forgotten themselves*, and were intent on seeing, with no idea of seeming. A thought flashed up into her face as she looked, and trembled over the sensitive countenance like sunlight on clear waters. "I wonder," she said; and then ceased, and dropped her eyes.

"If I would do something for you? Is that your wonder, you mysterious little Leprechaun?"

"Yes, partly. And if—if it would be right to ask you."

"Sorra a fear of that, machree, if you think you'd like to ask it."

Corda shook her head doubtfully. "I wish I was sure," she said. "Isn't it hard to be sure, Mr. Shaw? I thought and thought all yesterday evening, and nearly all night, and then at last I said my prayers, and afterwards I felt—I *hoped* that God would let me do what was right, if I tried *really*, you know."

Jerry Shaw watched the child keenly. He was puzzled. "What can be troubling that pure tender conscience?" thought he.

Corda pushed her hand beneath the pillow that supported her head, and drew forth a letter.

"Would you," she asked, "would you get me a pen and ink from the parlour, Mr. Shaw? They would not let me have them yesterday."

"Did you want to write, then?" cried Jerry, more and more perplexed.

"Only the direction. The inside of the letter is written. I did it with a pencil."

"But, Corda, is that all the great favour you had to ask of me? It's a mighty little matter to make such a fuss about!"

"No; not quite all. If you would please to get me the pen and ink first, I will tell you what I want to ask afterwards."

Mr. Shaw descended to the parlour in silence, took up the inkstand and a pen that had seen long service, and returned to Corda's bedside with them. She thanked him, and sitting up in bed, scrawled a direction on the envelope. Then she turned to Mr. Shaw, still holding the letter firmly in her hand, and said: "This is the favour, Mr. Shaw. Will you put this letter in the post for me? I wouldn't ask you if I was able to go out and do it myself. And—stop a moment, please, that's not all. Will you promise not to look at the direction, and never to tell anybody about the letter, not—not even papa?"

"Corda!"

"Indeed, I think it's right. Indeed, indeed I do. I know it seems sly and secret, but I hope I am doing what is best. Pray believe me."

She was so excited, and trembled so much, that the old man made her lie down, smoothed her hair from her brow, and bathed her forehead with some eau-de-Cologne that stood on the table. The sweet water was the property of her brother. Alfred Trescott was prone to indulge in such personal luxuries. But old Jerry neither knew nor cared anything about that. Presently Corda spoke again.

"If you think you can't promise, Mr. Shaw, I shall know it is because you think it would not be right. And you are much older and wiser than I, and I shall be sure you are not a bit unkind."

"I can promise, Corda, and I do promise. There's my word on it."

"Oh, thank you; thank you a thousand times! And I hope—I do hope you don't think ill of me for it." Corda glanced up very wistfully into his face as she spoke.

"Lingo," said Jerry Shaw, "exert your fine common sense and good feeling. Don't be sitting there on end like a china dog on a chimney-piece! Bedad, you're a quare fish; there's times when I can scarcely make you out myself. Tell Corda what we think of her."

The dog, who had watched his master's face unwinkingly during this address, rose up with his fore-paws resting on the bed, stretched out his rough head, and gently pushing aside her sleeve with his nose, licked Corda's fair slight hand and arm affectionately.

"I'm proud of ye, sir," said Jerry, seizing Lingo's bushy tail and shaking it with much heartiness. "You're a fine fellow, and I'm proud of ye. Now I'm going to do my errand. I shan't be long gone, and, meanwhile, you will remain with this lady and take care of her, d'ye hear me, now? Your behaviour this day has done equal honour to your head and heart, let me tell you that!"

Jerry took Corda's letter, carefully abstaining from glancing at the address on the cover.

"Oh, which letter-box will I put it into, ashore? Town or country?" he asked, pausing with his hand on the door.

"Town, please, Mr. Shaw," answered Corda, faintly, a bright blush flitting over her face.

"Very good, Corda. Now take my advice and lie still, and go to sleep if you can. You're worried and over-wrought altogether. And, Lingo, don't bother her with talk, d'ye mind me, now? Be aisy and quiet, and watch her silently."

Old Jerry's hobbling footsteps died away down the stairs, and the street door was heard to shut behind him.

Lingo gently withdrew his head from Corda's caressing hand, gave it a final hasty lick as an assurance of his unaltered regard, and then stretched himself on the floor with his nose between his fore-paws, as motionless as a stone, save for the heaving of his shaggy sides.

END OF BOOK V.

A HOLIDAY IN NORMANDY.

THE Grand Cours at Caen is the shady walk between the river and the green sea of meadows going out towards Montaign. We were there last night—the vigil of the Assumption, the eve of the Sainte Napoleon—a most sombre oppressive night, with a cloudy red moon, and thunder brooding in the air. In the distance, as the grey mist rose from the prairies to meet the twilight descending, we heard the ra-ta-ta, ra-ta-plan of drums at the barrack near the bridge of Vaucelles, and glimmering through the low branches of the elms we espied a throng of Chinese lanterns, dancing up and down, whirling round and round—white, green, blue, red, orange, striped, parti-coloured—then the flare of a torch, of two torches, of three, four, five, six, of a regiment of torches! It was the Fête des Flambeaux, and we were just in time to see the procession start from the barrack-yard, the soldiers stepping out to a quick gay march, the inner ranks bearing each a tall pole with five globe-lanterns aloft, and the outer ranks carrying torches that flittered in smoky pennons of crimson flame.

There was but a light scattering of crowd on the Cours, and, as the procession vanished luridly down a narrow street into the town, we turned a quieter way to gain our lodging in the Rue St. Jean, where the windows look down on a green court, once the site of the old house where Charlotte Corday lived awhile with her aunt, Madame Contellier de Bretteville, and ruminated that act of pagan heroism which has made her name immortal in the annals of revolution. Laurels, jessamine, bright ivy, wild hop, sycamore-trees, and rustling poplars fill the space where, until 1850, stood "an ancient house, with walls grey, rain-worn, fretted by time into a thousand crannies; a well, stone-rimmed, greened with moss, occupied an angle of the court; a doorway, narrow, low, its fluted jambs meeting in an arch overhead, showed the hollowed steps of a spiral stair

leading to the upper story; two lattice-windows, glazed in octagonal leaded frames, faintly lit the stair, and the vast, bare chamber"—the chamber of Charlotte.

It was all dusk under the trees as we entered the court, but it was not ghostly, for the shrill, high voices of half a dozen young *bonnes* laughing and gabbling round the kitchen door made it cheerful enough. How handsome are some of these Norman women! There is Françoise, a tall, straight, strong girl, with fair hair, large, languid, dark-grey eyes, firm features, clear skin, and dignity of movement enough for a duchess, as she hands a plate, and brings in a dish at dinner. She ought to bring in none but "lordly dishes." And there is Louise, the *portière*, the prettiest creature, with the prettiest way of forgetting everything of her duty but the bell, and the most piquant gestures, and "Eh!" to show her pearls of teeth when she is remonstrated with—for as for *scolding* Louise, a female dragon could not do it!

They were all on the *qui vive* for the passing of the Fête des Flambeaux; the merry *bonnes* and Louise came quickly forward to tell us we must go up into a room over the *porte-cochère* to see the procession come through the street by-and-by. We mounted to this room, the veriest old rats' hole, by an outside stone stair, with iron balustrade festooned with wild hop, and the *bonnes* mounted too, and Elise, the excellent cook, in a holiday temper. The stiff-set little body placed herself in an ancient tapestry chair, splendid, perhaps, when Louis the Fourteenth was king, and patiently awaited the arrival of the fête, but the *bonnes* crowded the windows vociferously, and Louise, taking us under her special direction and patronage, pointed out neighbours, friends, and acquaintance in the moving throng below. Baggy red trousers were more numerous than any others, and a remark to that effect put to flight all the pretty portress's smiles and dimples. It was wonderful how patriotic became her sweet eyes, her lively voice, when we said half the young men in France seemed to be soldiers.

"Mais tous. But all!" cried she, tragically, with hands uplifted. "We see no young men in my pays now!"

We asked what was her pays.

"Villers-Bocage, mam'zelle. Ah, it is gay, it is pretty! Trees, trees the whole way from Caen—but no young men. The conscription comes and takes them all. I don't know what we shall do! They go here, they go there; we cannot tell where they go. But they never come back. It is sad that—sad, *mais oui*."

Françoise joined us, stately, serious. "You have no soldiers in England, mam'zelle, only sailors?"

We told her that we had soldiers enough for the work they had to do, and pretty good soldiers on the whole.

The multitude in the street increased, and every now and then an alarm was raised of the procession coming, but still it did not come. Omnibuses came; diligences came, from La

Deliverande, Luc, Langrune, Lion, conveying travellers to the railway; carts came, light and heavy; and by-and-by an immense country waggon, piled high with sacks of grain, and drawn by four huge grey horses. The driver walked at the head of the leader, crying sonorously to open the way: "L'Empereur! L'Empereur! L'Empereur!" and the people fell back, laughing as at a good joke. The cumbrous machine thundered out of sight, and all was quiet again but the rustle of feet and hum of voices on the pavement.

At last, with a rattle of drums and triumphant music, the procession came: first, a dim transparency of Napoleon the Third, backed by a dim Eagle, and guarded by the torches flaring more smokily; then a diminished rank of lanterns, one blazing up to final extinction, and falling to be stamped out by the feet of the crowd. At a quick march from the Rue des Carmes, round the corner by the church of St. Jean, towards the Place St. Pierre the soldiers advanced, with grimed faces, reeking hot, and the mob trampling in a solid mass behind, before, beside them. Here and there the glare of a torch lighted up a visage in the mingled throng that looked possessed; but the swift pace left men little breath to shout, and the cries of "L'Empereur!" were faint, and few, and far between. We fancied we could distinguish the one voice that feebly raised them all.

But when the procession passed a second time, when the torches were burnt to the stump, and the lanterns were burnt out, when the band struck up *Partant pour la Syrie*, and the fête was almost in the dark, then there was a chorus to wake all the echoes in Caen, living and dead—not the voice of a blithe, wholesome enthusiasm, but of an excitement wrought up to frenzy, to fever-heat, "full of sound and fury signifying nothing."

"It is not like that in England, mam'zelle?" said Elise, the cook.

We said, "No, it was not like that in England."

The Fête des Flambeaux was over, and midnight brought thunder, lightning, and rain. And with thunder, lightning, and rain, rose the Sainte Napoleon, and the great day of the Blessed Mary's Assumption. The Holy Virgin, the chosen protectress of France, had her thousands and tens of thousands of devotees at the early services, but there was no press of loyal people to celebrate the Fête of the Emperor when *Te Deum* was sung at noon in the great church of St. Etienne. We went betimes, to secure good places for seeing the show, but we made a haste that nobody else made. And with what vivacity the rain poured all the way! We might have taken our leisure to arrive an hour later, and we should still have been early enough for all that came to pass. By advice of an amiable little peasant we went up into the triforium, and a lame old scholar in velvet skull-cap, who had taken an advantageous post which commanded the sanctuary and the nave to the west door, where the military were to

enter, offered it to us with a gay and gracious courtesy, saying that he had occasion to witness the ceremony every year of his life, and that perhaps we might never have a second opportunity. And so he drew back his stool, and stood behind us, content with casual glimpses of the time present, and as the glorious music rolled through the vast arches, was rapt away in dim reveries of the time past, to judge from the expression of his then spiritual face and bright far-gazing eyes.

And there is food enough for reverie in this grand old church of William the Conqueror for those who cherish historic memories. Men built well in his days, and here we look still on the very lines they conceived, the very stones they piled in the vast nave, the lofty vaults, the noble transepts. The large simplicity of the plan strikes us with a grave admiration. The spaces, the masses, are perfectly distributed and combined. There are neglect and dust; there are the traces of violent ravage, of war, of revolution; but there is no mean attempt at restoration to vex us, and no profusion of ornament to distract. Outside, Vandalism has been active and methodical in constructing even more than in destroying; but within, this finest and most ancient of the Norman basilicas has suffered chiefly from being let alone.

Long ago, in the wars of religion in the sixteenth century, the ashes of the founder were scattered to the four winds; but an inscription in black marble marks the place of his sepulture in front of the high altar, signifying that, there, had been buried, in 1087, the invincible William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy and King of England.

To-day the Conqueror's memorial stone was hidden by a gaudy carpet and velvet chairs, set in due gradation of rank for the officials who were to attend this public celebration of the Emperor's fête by command of authority. A distant sound of martial music announced their approach, and presently, out of the rain, through the great doors, marched in a double file of sappers, and took up their places at either side of the altar—tall men, bronzed, bearded like pards, and wearing on their breasts three or four medals each, trophies of valour and victory. Then came the flag, guarded, and blare blare, tramp tramp, clang clang, the band and the regiment, and overflowed the nave, and the aisles, and the transepts. The last ranks formed in two lines from the entrance to the gate of the choir, and between them, marshalled by the gigantic Swiss, in festal costume of scarlet and gold and white panache, advanced the general, the mayor, the president of the imperial court, the prefect, followed by a crowd of dignities in red robes, in orange robes, in silver lace, in blue scarves, in all sorts of official finery, and possessed the stalls and chairs of the choir up to the steps of the sanctuary.

And last, most splendid of all, entered the clergy, and mass began—a short military mass to the sound of fifes, cornets, drums, trumpets, clarions, and all kinds of music. Censers

swung, heads bowed, the host was elevated, and then from the great organ rolled the Te Deum, and filled the high vaults with sacred clamour.

It was over. The chief priest blessed the congregation from the steps of the altar, and out into the rain again marched the soldiers, the officials, the people. We turned to go too, and then the courteous old scholar, with a lively air of gratulation, addressed us, and said: "You will remember this day, and boast of it as one of the most beautiful in your lives, when you saw the Fête of the Emperor of the French, Napoleon the Third, celebrated in the church of William the Conqueror!"

THE "LONG" FIRM.

THE "Long" Firm is an old-established house, with head-quarters in Manchester, branch establishments in most of the principal cities and towns in the United Kingdom, and correspondents all over the world. Originally founded by three brothers of the name of Long, it has since passed into other hands, though, like most old and reputable establishments, the firm is still designated by the name of the founders.

The principle on which its business is conducted is extremely simple, and calculated to result in large profits:—to buy everything, and to pay for nothing. The firm has never yet been through the Bankruptcy Court, and it passed scathless through the recent commercial crisis which resulted in the ruin of so many less securely constituted establishments. Having had commercial relations with the concern to the extent of upwards of a hundred pounds, I can testify to the promptitude, tact, and energy, with which their business is conducted. Friends of mine have also been honoured with the favours of the "Long" Firm.

My friend Mr. Layling, sculptor, had exhibited a number of valuable works in marble, bronze, and ivory at a Fine Art Exhibition in Manchester. The term of the exhibition was drawing to a close without any of these objects being sold, when Mr. Layling received a note from a Liverpool gentleman, requesting to know the lowest price that would be accepted for the whole collection, the writer being disposed to purchase it to adorn his mansion. The letter contained some intelligent and appreciative remarks on many of the works—particularising their merits, hinting at defects—and appeared to be written by a cultivated connoisseur. It was dated from an aristocratic-sounding square, and Mr. Layling having little doubt that he was entering on a correspondence with a wealthy merchant-prince, replied, naming his terms. The customer returned answer, that, although he could not consider the price named, extravagant for such a collection, it nevertheless exceeded his present means; but he offered to purchase several of the articles separately, particularly mentioning an ivory plaque of a Minerva, which he directed to be forwarded at once, promising

to send its price, twenty-five guineas, on receipt. The "plaque" was duly sent. Not receiving the money or a reply from his patron, Mr. Layling took a journey to Liverpool from the south of England, and there hunted up the square with the aristocratic name from which the letter was dated. The square was a court. Knocking at the door of a hovel, he inquired if Mr. Carruthers lived there? A poorly-dressed woman said:

"Yes—but he was away; would not return for some days."

"Very good; you're his wife, of course. I'm Mr. Layling, from Surrey. I see how it is—I have been swindled; but I give you half an hour in which to return my ivory carving, and pay my expenses to Liverpool. If you don't do it, I shall call the police, give you in custody, and break your windows." And he took a seat.

The woman at first protested that her husband had pawned the ivory carving; but after a deal of trouble she produced it from a bundle of rags in the corner of the room.

Having recovered his Minerva, Mr. Layling consented to dispense with the police.

"Now," said he, "pay me my thirty-seven shillings travelling expenses, or I break your windows."

"Well, sir," replied the woman, "I will be candid with you. It is no good asking us for money, for we haven't a sixpence in the house. We have been very unfortunate lately, and business dull. It is quite true that we belong to the "Long" Firm, but we are not the principals in the business—my husband is merely employed at a salary of thirty shillings a week, and a commission on what he brings in. As to the police, they know us very well; and if you like to call them, you are welcome. Many people are weak enough to think we can be given in charge for this sort of thing, but they find out their mistake. Their only course is to sue us for debt; and as we never have anything to seize, it is never worth while. Some people waste a deal of money in finding this out. As for you, sir, I am sure you can't complain, for you've got your goods back."

Mr. Layling being a determined character, broke the windows, and left.

My friend Royston, nurseryman and horticulturist in Hampshire, was actually twice swindled by the same "Long." One summer afternoon a gentleman alights from his dog-cart at Mr. Royston's extensive grounds, and gives in his card, "Mr. Walter Long, Longsight, Manchester." He has come to look out some shrubs, trees, and floricultural rarities, for his "place." He evinces considerable knowledge of the specimens shown him, but defers to Mr. Royston's judgment in the selection. About fifty pounds-worth are chosen, and promised to be sent off. Mr. Long explained that he never ran bills, always preferred to pay cash; but having been at great expense about his "place," and having allowed himself to be persuaded to exceed the amount he intended expending in shrubs, he supposed his acceptance at two months would

be satisfactory? The candour of his manner disarming suspicion, Mr. Royston was prevailed upon to part with his goods on those terms. In two months' time he discovered himself to be a victim of the "Long" firm, without hope of redress. It is worse than useless to sue a man on a bill who has got nothing; while, as no "false pretences" had been made, he was not amenable to criminal law, for Mr. Walter Long really did live at Longsight, Manchester, and had a "place" there, comprising two rooms, and about half-a-crown's worth of furniture.

A month after this bill had been dishonoured, the same gentleman, in the same dog-cart (hired from the neighbouring town), presented himself once more at Mr. Royston's place of business. Mr. Royston could hardly believe his eyes; called him a thief and a swindler, and ordered him off his grounds.

"All you say may be correct," Mr. Long owned, very calmly. "I am a swindler, and I don't deny it. I am a member of the 'Long' Firm, but our rule is never to swindle the same man twice. I am come to make, as far as lies in my power, reparation for the loss I caused you. You remember those shrubs you sent me? I sold them pretty well, I am pleased to tell you. (Don't be angry, but listen.) They gave such satisfaction, that I now have an order to supply another lot at a much better figure, and I thought I couldn't do better than come and make an honest deal with you for them."

"And you think me fool enough to be gulled a second time?" said Mr. Royston.

"Nothing of the kind, my dear sir; I bring the money with me" (he produced a bundle of notes), "and I do not wish you to part with your goods till they are paid for. I am sure you are too good a man of business to allow any sore feeling at being 'done' before, to interfere with an opportunity of turning money now. Besides, we do business honestly at times. I have a *bonâ fide* commission to buy these trees, and out of my profit I will certainly pay you something off the acceptance."

Mr. Royston not seeing how he could lose money on such terms, was finally persuaded to deal. Shrubs were selected to the same amount as before—fifty pounds—packed in his waggon, and started into town; the arrangement being that Mr. Long should drive Mr. Royston to his hotel, where he would pay the account.

Having directed his man not to deliver the goods at the railway station, but to wait with them outside the hotel for orders (a precaution which Mr. Long assented to as quite justified), Mr. Royston mounted the dog-cart, and was driven in town to the hotel by his customer. Arrived there, Mr. Long called for brandy-and-water, cigars, and writing materials; paid his hotel bill, somewhat ostentatiously displaying his gold and notes; and requested Mr. Royston to write him out a receipt for the amount of his account.

This done, Mr. Long began to count out the money in payment; but stopped in the middle

of his occupation, as if struck by a sudden thought.

"This won't do," he said, thoughtfully. "I have not been a swindler for nothing. If I pay you this money now, you will pocket it for your acceptance, and then go and tell your man to drive back to your place again with the shrubs, so that I shall be swindled this time."

Mr. Royston disclaimed any idea of the kind. "No doubt, my dear sir, no doubt; but a man in my position can't afford to place himself in any one's hands. Now, you see that I have the money to pay, and I know that you have the receipt in your pocket. Tell your man to deliver the goods at the railway station (goods department), when I will give you the notes, and you can hand me the receipt. That's fair to you, and secures me."

Not seeing any hitch, and knowing that Long had the money, Mr. Royston acceded to this proposition, though not without considerable hesitation. Accordingly, the goods were consigned at the railway station to a Manchester firm by Long's direction. Mr. Royston asked for his money.

"Shake hands with me, my dear sir," said Long; "you are the best friend I ever met."

"What do you mean?"

"This. My train starts in ten minutes; you can send in your account when you please, or you can draw on me at two months if you prefer—or book it, you know."

Royston fetched a policeman; but when Mr. Long explained that it was a mere matter of debt to be recovered by the usual process, the constable regretted he could do nothing.

"However," thought Mr. Royston, "I can at least stop my goods." But, on going to the traffic manager, he learnt that goods once consigned to any person could not be reclaimed, any more than a letter dropped into the post: the company being tied by law to deliver them only to the address given.

Mr. Royston took the next train to Manchester, and there communicated with the police, but without effect; for the shrubs were consigned to a most respectable auctioneer, who had no course but to sell them as ordered, and he had handed over the money they realised, to Long before a writ for the amount could be issued against him. Then he was gone. The sheriff's officer told Mr. Royston, "It's no good suing them Longs, sir; there's always writs out for 'em, but they've got nothing to take."

And now for my own case. I am a provincial coachmaker, with a large export trade. In September, 1864, a well but not over-dressed man, about thirty, of Hebrew descent, and of very gentlemanly address, entered my office, and presented this card:

Messrs. JONDERMAIN and Co.,
Shippers,
Gracechurch-street,
London.

The time of day was afternoon, two hours before banks closed.

"You are acquainted with my firm, I believe,

and have had previous dealings with them?" he remarked.

"I well remembered the familiar card of the house. Three years previously I had had dealings with Messrs. Jondermain, to whose agents in the West Indies I then exported largely. But I had done nothing with them since that time.

"My name," he continued, "is Alfred Harris. I am Messrs. Jondermain's agent in Havre. They are extending their connexion in various quarters, and I have been associated with the firm but recently—much later than the period at which you formerly did business with them."

I then inquired after the health of the junior partner, which I knew had been very delicate.

"Young Mr. Jondermain is still in a most precarious state; he has been in Madeira for the last few months; but is sinking rapidly, and we fear will never return."

All this tallied with what I knew of the young gentleman. If I had had any suspicion at the time (which I had not), this would have dispelled it.

"A widow lady at Havre, a friend of Mr. Jondermain's," Mr. Harris proceeded, "newly returned from the West Indies, and accustomed to use one of your carriages there, has commissioned me to purchase a similar carriage of your make, for her present requirements. I left Mr. Jondermain in London this morning, who has endorsed the order, and, in fact, given me a draft to pay for it."

Mr. Harris was then taken into the show-room, where he immediately selected the carriage required. This again looked right, for it was one of the kind previously sent, per Messrs. Jondermain, to the West Indies. It was a large door-cab phaeton. I informed Mr. Harris that this carriage was already sold, that it would take some weeks to finish another like it, and that the price was one hundred and forty pounds. He appeared much disappointed, told me that the lady could not wait, and that he must get a carriage of that particular sort immediately. I showed him smaller carriages of the same sort, but without doors, at a hundred guineas. For some time he was sure one of these would not do. At length he said that on his own responsibility he was unable to buy anything except exactly what was ordered, but he would go and telegraph to Messrs. Jondermain to ask if they would sanction his taking the smaller carriage. With this decision he left, promising to return in a few hours, as soon as he could get a reply from his principals.

When he was gone, my clerk told me that Mr. Harris *knew* this particular phaeton he appeared anxious for, to be sold, for that he had been told so. I attached, however, but little importance to the fact at the time.

In about three hours—one hour after banks closed—Mr. Harris again presented himself with a telegraphic reply received from his firm, to the effect that as he best knew the

lady's requirements, they would leave the matter to his judgment.

On this, Mr. Harris agreed to take the smaller phaeton at one hundred guineas, and requested an account to be made out and receipted. The customary discount to the firm having been deducted, he begged very hard for a commission on the transaction for himself; indeed, he was nearly a quarter of an hour haggling over this question with true Israelitish skill; but the claim was not allowed.

Thereupon protesting it was a very hard case, Mr. Harris produced a cheque, given him that morning, he said, by his employers, with which to pay for the carriage. The amount of the cheque was one hundred and thirty pounds, intended, as he explained, to purchase the larger phaeton. After the amount of bargaining he had previously displayed, it appeared reasonable enough to suppose that his first intention had been, after beating me down as low as he could, to have finally offered this draft for one hundred and thirty pounds in payment for the one hundred and forty pounds carriage. So far it looked natural and in accordance with Hebrew business. In the present instance, however, he required thirty pounds change from his cheque.

Always accustomed to regard with suspicion anything like an exchange of cheques, more especially after banking hours, I made an excuse respecting the situation in which the crest should be painted, in order to get Mr. Harris down-stairs into the show-room with my clerk, so as to give me five minutes to myself with the cheque. I made the most of this time. Turning out from my pigeon-holes the bundle of correspondence for 1861 marked J, I drew out three or four of Messrs. Jondermain's letters of that date. One of them happened to be an advice of forwarding money, as follows:

"Herewith we have the pleasure to hand you our draft on English and Irish Bank," &c.

Mr. Harris's draft appeared so far in order that it was also on the English and Irish Bank. Next for the signature. As nearly as I could recollect, the previous cheques I had received from the firm had been signed "Jondermain and Co." Mr. Harris's draft was signed "John Jondermain." This might have been suspicious but for two reasons; first, the signature "John Jondermain" was, to all appearance, written by the same hand which had signed my letters "Jondermain and Co." I satisfied myself of this by comparing it with three or four letters. The handwriting in the body of the cheque was also the same. Secondly, it was not improbable that his son being away and not likely ever to return, Mr. Jondermain might have taken to sign drafts in his own name. At all events, having compared the handwriting, I saw no reason to doubt its being the same as the handwriting of many similar drafts I had received from the same firm.

Taking into consideration the familiarity of Mr. Harris with the son's illness, and some other circumstances about the establishment of Messrs. Jondermain; which I have not thought

needful to particularise; his giving me the card of the firm; and the plausible reason for which he required change of the cheque (namely, being unable to get the larger carriage he wanted); and then adding to that, the similarity of the handwriting; I had no doubt of the genuineness of the draft. So when Mr. Harris returned to the office, I began to write out a cheque for the thirty pounds change. I mentioned that my former drafts were signed Jondermain and Co., adding, that I had no doubt this one was correct enough.

"Oh yes," said Mr. Harris; "since his son has been given over, Mr. Jondermain does everything in his own name."

I was about filling up the cheque "to the order of the firm," when my customer begged me to insert his name instead, giving as a reason that his account was debited by Messrs. Jondermain with the total amount of the draft for one hundred and thirty pounds when he received it in the morning, and that consequently my cheque would go into his own bank account. That this was not unreasonable, those most conversant with business transactions of the kind will allow. Moreover, as he professed his indifference, after all, about the matter, I did as he requested, at the same time crossing the cheque to make it payable only through a banker.

With this last precaution, I was satisfied that, even supposing anything could possibly be wrong, there would still be plenty of time to telegraph to Messrs. Jondermain, and get their reply, before the bank opened in the morning, when at worst I could stop my cheque. Accordingly, I agreed to deliver the carriage on the following day, and then had a quarter of an hour's chat with Mr. Harris, whom I found remarkably well informed on most topics. I smoked one of his cigars—a fine-flavoured Regalia, but expensive; for it cost me exactly thirty pounds.

When he left, I telegraphed thus to his firm:

"To Messrs. Jondermain and Co., Gracechurch-street, London.

"Received your cheque, a hundred and thirty pounds, for carriage, from Alfred Harris, and gave change thirty pounds. Reply if all right."

At nine o'clock that evening I got a reply as follows:

"We know no such person as Alfred Harris. Cheque forged."

I was about to take my hat to get a private interview with the bank manager to stop my cheque, when a neighbour, a jeweller in the town, dropped in. I told him of the circumstance; when my story came to the cheque, he said:

"I see it all; you're done. I changed your cheque this evening."

"You did!"

"I did. A gentleman called on me, purchased a small diamond ring for five pounds ten, and handed me your thirty-pound cheque in payment. 'I suppose you know that name?' he asked, with a smile. 'Oh yes,' said I, with

another smile; and without more ado I gave him change. Wouldn't you have done the same, though it *was* crossed?"

It only remains to offer an explanation of Mr. Harris's manner of working this swindle.

I learned from Messrs. Jondermain, that when I was doing business with them in 1861, they employed an office-lad for a short time to copy letters, and that, having found him out in pilfering stamps, and having also had information that he was a relative of the "Longs," they dismissed him. On turning to their letter-book of the date in question, they found several pages torn out; among them, the pages containing copies of letters to me on the subject of carriages. Supposing the boy to have stolen, in addition, a few cards of the firm and a blank cheque or two, it is easy to make out the sequel. He takes them to his employers, the Longs, who hand them to one of their staff to study. Furnished with all the information required, and a fac-simile of Messrs. Jondermain's signature, "Mr. Harris" wanted nothing but an opportunity to use his knowledge.

If it be asked why I did not endeavour to trace Alfred Harris, the answer is, that I did so the same night, and ineffectually.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

A GAMBLER'S LIFE IN THE LAST CENTURY.

ON the 2nd of February, 1725, between nine and ten o'clock at night, three gentlemen, named Gower, Blunt, and Hawkins, left Will's coffee-house in Covent-garden, and went to the Castle Tavern in Drury-lane, with Major Oneby, a well known gamester and duellist. Here Mr. Rich, a friend of the three first-named gentlemen, joined them over their Burgundy. The landlord was obsequious and the drawers civil, for the wine was flowing fast. Some of the party had been to the playhouse together to see the new tragedy of Hecuba.

The gambling scene in the Rake's Progress shows us the sort of places that Major Oneby, the professional gamester, haunted. Gamblers were the curses of those days, the horror of wives and mothers, the dread of fathers. They were prayed against as men used to pray against the Plague and the Fire. The green cloth these men played upon soon led to the green fields of Tyburn and the leafless tree. Their cards were never without pin-marks on the backs, their dice never fell even. They were always in search of hearty country gentlemen, wild Templars, or reckless City men. They were the great lures to those wainscoted rooms strewn with cards, where men, crazed by their losses, raved unnoticed by the victorious players; while, beside the caged-in fire, moping wretches sat, heedless of the strong waters brought them by the boy of the house, and brooded over the night-ride to Hounslow or Bagshot that should either recoup them for ever, or undo them quite. Their tricks were the old tricks of centuries before, founded on a deep

knowledge of the chief passions and follies of human nature, and seldom found to fail—tricks old even in Holbein's time. In their gangs there was always a combination of talent and of slang. The Guller was the old Jew miser who was ready to lend money to the defeated player when he became excited by the hope of recovering his losses; the Woodpecker was the parasite who hung round the novice and introduced him to the gang; the Eagle was the strong player who knew all the modes of secreting or forcing cards. They had flat-faced rings which reflected the cards that they drew; or they put their gull before a mirror, which reflected his cards to an accomplice. Sometimes a bright-cut steel sword-hilt, laid over their left wrist, answered the same purpose of a mirror. Not unfrequently the Eagle took the form of the Deluder—a careless, handsome Gil Blas, who would drop in by accident and join the game, or stand behind the gull's chair and signal to his accomplices. Button his glove—that meant ace; play with his wig—strong in trumps; touch his solitaire buckle—weak in diamonds. Each finger implied a certain number, and was by turns a beacon or a false light. It was not unfrequent either to purposely spill wine on the table; and even that served to reflect the colour and value of otherwise hidden cards.

Major Oneby was neither the Eagle nor the Woodpecker. He had sunk into the lowest of all gamesters—the Bully. He was the blunt frank old soldier who talked of Marlborough, by—, sir, and Prince Eugene. He had a gross humour of his own, and told infamous stories, when he was not quarrelsome nor dangerous. He roared and cursed for wine at Will's or the Mitre, struck the drawers, trod on people's hats, or kicked their swords as he passed to his seat. He was the terror of all quiet and timidly respectable men. He used to clap his sword on the table, and glance round defiantly at the company. He would howl out blasphemies—addressed to no one specially, but still amounting to a challenge to the fiercest or bravest man in the room. It was necessary to his reputation as a terrorist that he should kill a man now and then, and woe to the young Templar, vain of his fencing, who that night came in his way. He volunteered to show the young country spendthrift the sights of the town. Some evening, after three or four flasks of wine, the Deluder pretends, with his own jovial laugh, to be tired of Garrick and Quin, of Vauxhall and Ranelagh, of the Mall and the fencing-school, of the masquerade and the park. Some people they meet by chance at Will's turn out very lively acquaintances, with a turn for faro or chicken hazard. They adjourn to a gambling-house, and set to work with the dice and the red and black pips. Mr. Littlebrain, the rich young gentleman from Somersetshire, at first wins surprisingly. The gold tide sets in towards him. They call for more Burgundy. He insists on higher stakes, astonished to find how he is startling the old dice-shakers of Covent-

garden. More Burgundy, the room seems to get lighter and larger, the dice fly out faster and faster. The tide at last turns, the gold floats from him in shoals. He has now lost all he had won and five thousand guineas more, besides the large farm near Taunton. He has also signed some papers that a good-natured old lawyer present requires as securities for the loan of another thousand, already half gone. Gradually the fumes of the wine subside, and one suspicious glance discloses to him the old lawyer changing a pack of cards which he (novice) had placed ready at his elbow. He sees a friend make signs to the benevolent lawyer. Then he feels into what a pack of wolves he has fallen. In a moment Littlebrain dashes over his chair, leaps on a settee, gets down his hat and sword from the peg behind the door, and shouts "Thieves!" from the window to the watch, who have just passed, crying, sleepily:

"Past four, and a rainy morning."

The gang is furious, their eyes glare, they prepare for a stampede. The gallant captain, whose red face, barred with black plaister, looks like a hot fire seen between the bars of a grate, sweeps two or three dozen guineas from the green cloth into his panniers of pockets. Then some one knocks out the lights, several swords clash with Littlebrain's, and one passes through his unlucky body. He staggers to the stairs, and falls headlong down them—dead. There is a dash at the watchmen, who threaten the gamblers with their staves. The old men, however, fall before the tempestuous charge, and the next moment there is no one in the gambling-house but two frightened women, an old watchman, who is holding the dim lantern to the dead man's face with one hand, and removing his watch and purse with the other; the only sound is the wind whistling through the key-hole. In such affairs, subtle, cruel, and deadly, Major Oneby has been no subordinate actor.

To return to our story. All went on at first merry and friendly. The flask went round, and the wit went with it. At last a wager is laid between Mr. Rich and Mr. Blunt as to whether Mr. Mills did or did not act the other day the part of Julius Cæsar in Shakespeare's play. Both gentlemen are opinionated and heated, but one of the two is of course wrong, and Mr. Blunt loses. The flask-bottle being empty, Mr. Rich and the major call for a box and for dice. The drawer says they have dice but no box. Not much gambling evidently goes on at the Castle Tavern. It is only the blunt hearty major who seems to care much about the matter, but he is persistent, and his energy forces on the company to play.

"No dice-box?" he says. "Well, then, drawer, bring the pepper-box."

Mr. Hawkins, knowing how gambling spoils good talk and a friendly evening, looks rather averse to the turn things are taking, and says:

"Let us play low."

And, after a trifling loss, refuses to play any more. The major turns his gross burly body at this, and glowers at him with his blood-

shot eyes, affecting himself to be the promoter of all the amusement of the evening.

"Why do you come into company," he says angrily to Mr. Hawkins, "when you won't do as others do?"

Mr. Hawkins answers coldly, "Don't trouble yourself, sir, about me. I'll do as I please."

Mr. Rich, more sanguine and careless, called out:

"Who will set me three half-crowns?"

Mr. Gower jocularly drew some money from his pocket, and holding it in his closed hand upon the table, said:

"I'll set ye three pieces."

He then lifted his hand, and they proved to be only three halfpence. The major, who was in earnest, and had very serious views of play, grew more vexed at the game being simply derided, fired up, and swore that Gower was an impertinent puppy to set three halfpence.

Then Mr. Gower effervesced also, and cried:

"Sir, I am not afraid of ye, and he that calls me a puppy is a scoundrel."

Quick as the serpent light that rose in his eyes the major snatched up a bottle by the neck and swung it fiercely and swiftly at the head of Mr. Gower. The flask bottle, heavy with Burgundy, brushed Mr. Gower's wig and struck a cloud of white powder from it, but it did no hurt. Mr. Gower, in return, tossed more coolly a wine-glass at the major. Both at the same moment then pushed back their chairs and ran to their swords. Gower, nimbler and younger, jumped on the table and reached his from the peg first. Then stepping down he drew and stood on defence, but made no offer to lunge. In the mean time, Major Oneby also took down his sword and cane, which hung together, and there being a table and chair in his way, came fiercely round the table to do battle with Mr. Gower, but Mr. Rich stepped between them, and told the major, as he was drawing his sword,

"If you make a lunge, major, it must be through my body, and as I am unarmed, that will be wilful murder."

The duellists of those days knew all the legal boundaries between murder and homicide.

Mr. Gower then threw his sword by on a table, and they all sat down again.

"Come, major," said Mr. Gower, offering his hand frankly, "let us be reconciled. Words spoken in heat may be forgotten and forgiven."

But the major, driven from his booty, was inexorable. He growled:

"By —, you lie. I'll have your blood, by —." Then turning to Mr. Hawkins furiously, he said, "This is all along of you."

"Why, then," replied Mr. Hawkins, "if you have done with him and have anything to say to me, I am your man, and will see you out."

"No!" said the soured major, "I have another fellow to deal with first."

Mr. Blunt good-naturedly invited the whole company to dinner on the next day, hoping to prevent future mischief.

"No! I'll dine with none of ye," exclaimed Oneby.

"Are you angry, sir?" said Mr. Blunt. "Have you anything to say to me?"

"Or me?" said Mr. Hawkins.

"Or me?" said Mr. Rich.

No; he had nothing to say to any of them. This was between two and three in the morning.

At last some one rose and proposed to go. The major, who had continued a sort of sullen talk, threw his big rough coat over his broad shoulders, and fastened one or two of the buttons. These coats were useful to bullies in sword encounters, for they baffled thrusts and entangled blades. Mr. Hawkins came out first; Mr. Blunt and Rich followed; Mr. Gower was last. Mr. Hawkins asked John Barnes, the drawer, if his chair was ready, as it was raining. Being told it was, he went out, the drawer unbarring the front door into Drury-lane for them. Just as Mr. Gower was following, Major Oneby, all the time in a smoulder, now broke out once more into full flame, and said to Gower:

"Hark ye, young gentleman, a word wi' ye."

Gower turned back; he and the major both re-entered the room, and Mr. Rich heard the door slammed savagely, and the bolt shot with the violence of rage. Then there was heard a loud rasping and clashing of swords, and heavy stamps on the floor. Death was locked in with them. Rich and Blunt, hearing open war broke out, called to the drawer to open the door. The door would not yield at first either at bolt or hinge, but by their united efforts the three at last forced it open and got in.

Too late, too late. Poor Gower had been disarmed and was already struck; Major Oneby, intent on death, guarded the door. He wanted to taste his revenge, and was delaying the coup de grace as cats delay the death of the mouse they torture. His sword was pointing at his enemy. Gower then, in the intensity of despair, closed with the gambler, rather as if he were falling forward against him through weakness, but still feebly intent on a mortal grapple, for he knew well he was in the hands of a professional assassin. The major clutched his shoulder with his left hand, but quitted him when the three men broke in, and Barnes, the drawer, cried:

"For God's sake what are you doing?"

As Mr. Rich held up his hand to part the two men, he felt the sting of a sword pricking through his coat. It was Major Oneby's sword, but there seemed to be no intention in him to wound Mr. Rich. Almost at the same moment Mr. Blunt cried out that he was stabbed in the stomach, but in the excitement no one could decide whether it was done in mistake by Mr. Gower or in a rage by Major Oneby. The wound was supposed to be mortal.

At this moment Mr. Hawkins returned—he who had at first scented out the major's real character, and persuaded his friends not to play. He had been waiting out under a pent-house as it rained, and there was no chair near, nor any watchman to call one. Seeing none of the company come out, he concluded that there was

either some mischief brewing, or another bottle of wine to be had, so he stepped back into the tavern. There he found a cluster of pale and horrified faces, sobered now, watching poor Gower, who was bleeding, and leaning half fainting over a chair. There was not twelve hours' life in him. In another chair sat Mr. Blunt, moaning, and also apparently dying.

Mr. Shaw, a surgeon then in the house, came and dressed the wounds of both men. Mr. Blunt proved to be dangerously hurt. Mr. Gower was languishing; his intestines appeared at the wound. A second rupture was also suspected. The major with the bloodshot eyes and the evil mouth stood by in his frouzy campaigning wig, his cruel hand on the tarnished hilt of his sword, swearing that the first glass had been flung by Mr. Gower, and that he (the major) had not only received the first affront, but had also been first drawn upon.

When the two wounded men had been sent home in sedan-chairs, Mr. Rich and Mr. Hawkins came out of the tavern with Major Oneby, slow pacing and melancholy. It had been an evil night, and the moon was rising over the roofs of a dull blood colour. Mr. Rich said to the major as they walked together:

"I am afraid you have killed Mr. Gower."

To which the major replied confidently:

"No, I might have done it if I would, but I have only frightened him. Suppose I had killed him? I know what to do in these affairs; for if I had killed him to-night in the heat of passion, I should have had the law on my side; but if I had done it at any other time it would have looked like a set meeting and not a rencontre."

The major was learned in duels, but he had forgotten the law for once. The presumption of law was, that if a considerable interval elapsed between a provocation and a fight, the renewal of the quarrel proved malice, and made the aggressor a murderer.

Mr. Rich knew this, and remembered that the major first began the quarrel in his vexation at the friends refusing to play at hazard after the second main; so he simply said:

"I advise you to make off, for fear of the worst."

The frightened waiter, when the dangerous company left the Castle Tavern, went peering about the room with a light. There were several small pools of blood, especially close to the wainscot behind the flap of the great oval table where Rich had found Gower's sword stained with blood for five inches from the point.

The next evening a mysterious letter was brought to Mr. Burdet, a surgeon near Red Lion-square, by a man in a coach, desiring him to come and see Major Oneby at the house of a Mr. Gardiner in Dean-street, where he was concealing himself, having been wounded in a rencontre. The major had one wound an inch and a half long below his knee and one on his flank; two of his fingers were cut in the first joints; there were several holes and cuts in his clothes; but there was an unreal air about the

wounds which made the surgeon feel suspicious, for they were none of them a quarter of an inch deep, and the thrust below the knee was only a graze.

That same day Mr. Gower slowly sank and died. Mr. Rich, bending over him, asked him, just before the change for death came on, "if he had received his wound fairly?" He answered faintly, with great effort:

"I think I did—but—I don't know—what might have happened—if you—had not—come in." It is probable that Major Oneby, having disarmed the young fellow, would have stabbed him mercilessly till he had killed him on the spot.

The major was tried at the Old Bailey in March of the same year. He pleaded that he had not first called for the box and dice, and that Mr. Gower threw the glass and drew first; but the court decided that it was clear the prisoner gave the first provocation, and it was not denied that he killed the deceased. If there had been no reconciliation from the time the bottle was thrown to the time the last thrust was made, it was murder.

The jury agreed upon a special verdict. The counsel on both sides then drew up their points of the evidence for the consideration of the judges. The major, who had entertained great hopes of getting off for "manslaughter," rather struck silent by this delay, was remanded to Newgate, where he spent a whole year comfortably, without irons, and in the best room of the prison. Finding that no steps had been taken by the prosecutor to bring on the case, he now considered that the enemy had no hopes, and moved to have the case tried in the King's Bench. The case was tried in February, 1726. Lord Chief Justice Raymond, however, adjourned the case.

On his way back to Newgate the gallant officer was boisterous, jovial, hopeful, and exulting. He stopped and dined at the King's Arms Tavern in the Strand. He was sure, he boasted, that the special verdict would be in his favour, and he should have nothing to do but to return to the army and repair the loss of the trial by plundering the enemy. Men of this kind always trade on their former positions in their days of innocence.

On the 6th of May, 1727, the judges met at Serjeants Inn, if possible to end the case. Meanwhile his not very honourable antecedents had been found out and considered. John Oneby, aged fifty-three, was the son of a respectable and successful lawyer at Barwell, in Leicestershire. The boy had been well educated, and served his clerkship with a man eminent in the profession; but young Oneby was proud and ambitious; he aimed at higher things than clerkships, and chafed at the restrictions of the office. Sir Nathan Wright, the lord-keeper, being a near relation of his mother, application was made to him to push the fortunes of his young kinsman, but all he could or would give him was the humble place of a train-bearer. Oneby brooked this for some time, hoping for a better prize; but

finding none come, he threw down the keeper's train with disgust, and resolved to join the army abroad. His friends soon procured him a commission, and he served under Marlborough in Flanders. The career suited his turbulent spirit, and he acquired the reputation of a useful and brave officer, having fought in several battles and sieges, and received several wounds. The dark side of his nature soon began to show itself. He became quarrelsome and revengeful. He had a duel at Bruges, outside the camp, with an officer of horse. Oneby's wounded antagonist died the next day. A court-martial was held, but the duel having been considered fair, Oneby was honourably acquitted, and was now known among "people of honour" as a duellist that had felled his man. He afterwards fought a Lieutenant Tooley at Port Royal, in Jamaica. Both combatants were desperately wounded, but Tooley lingered for eight months before he died. Oneby was never brought to trial. By seniority Oneby had risen, after twenty-two years' hard service, to the rank of major in Honeywood's regiment of dragoons; but the peace of Utrecht coming, the major had to seek other roads to fortune, and Mercury soon found him one covered with green cloth.

The major had still one virtue left. He had courage. While the judges at Serjeants Inn were deciding on his fate, he made extremely merry, and kept high revel in Newgate over smoking punch, drinking the healths of his judges, who he boasted knew him to be a man of honour, and resolved not to hurt him. In the midst of his tipsy songs a good-natured friend, whom he had known over the green cloth, entered with a grisly oath, and swore that eleven of the twelve judges had decided to bring it in **WILFUL MURDER**. This struck down the hopes of the roystering major as with a poleaxe. To use his own confession, "it frightened him cursedly." To lower him still more, and to hang, as it were, his whole mind with black, two or three men he had sent to watch and listen round Serjeants Inn did not return that night to the Ark, and this made his fears rise up like a swelling sea. The fact was, that the judges, having heard counsel on both sides, had broken up about ten at night without declaring their final opinion. No one, therefore, could speak with certainty; but from small things that leaked out through the lawyers' clerks and porters, it was generally thought that the major would be shortly cast for murder.

Oneby, shaking off his drunkenness, felt the ground sinking under him; he called over the roll of his few respectable friends before the last desperate step of throwing himself on the king's mercy, clinging, however, still to the smallest hopes; as a man, finding a bush on the cliff-side fail him as he climbs, snatches at even a flower or at blades of grass. The wretched man still flattered himself that the judges might determine in his favour, till one day the cell door opened, and the keeper of Newgate entered, followed by a beetle-browed jailer carrying a pile of heavy chains.

The order had come that the major was to be double ironed. He was to have a man placed in his room every night. The sense of having once been a gentleman returned vividly to his mind; he appeared much shocked, and was eager to know whether any secret order of the judges had arrived, or whether it arose from some false information of his desire to escape. He hoped the latter; but the keeper refused to satisfy him, and ordered the jailer to at once put on the irons. The rascal's heart gave way at this degradation, and he burst into tears.

The person appointed to watch in the major's room was a man named John Hooper, afterwards the public executioner, an honest and faithful fellow, who obtained his promotion "by pure merit and without bribes," as a contemporaneous paper says approvingly. The major expressed at first great horror at his hard, malign face.

"What the d—," he said, in his old blustering way, "do you bring this fellow here for? Whenever I look at him I shall think of hanging." But he soon grew reconciled when he found Hooper was a mimic, a teller of ribald stories, who could imitate the itinerant Methodists, and joke, and describe all the humours of the prison and the half wild beasts that inhabited it.

Three weeks more of this cruel suspense and wavering justice, and the gamester was brought up to the King's Bench bar to receive the judgment of the court. Lord Chief Justice Raymond told him that the judges had unanimously found him guilty of wilful murder, and recapitulated to him their reasons. The prisoner prayed to be recommended to his Majesty's clemency for his long and faithful services in the army. The judges turned stony faces upon the miserable man. As to mercy, he must, they said, apply for that elsewhere; where he stood now was only a court of justice. Formal sentence of death was, at last, passed upon him, and his execution ordered for the 4th of July.

He had exhausted his London friends; he must now go himself, like the prodigal son returning from a far country, and sue to his Leicestershire friends. He wrote abjectly to them, begging their pardon for past follies, and entreating them to come up and help him. Some did relent; but the major's old haughtiness resisted all rebukes, and one relation left Newgate and instantly posted home. A cousin only continued with him faithfully, from real pity, till his death. That one lingering friend, perhaps, proved that there was still some redeeming point left in a bad man. The major had boasted largely of the noblemen he had known in Flanders and met at gambling-tables; but his friends, on inquiring, found no one who would speak for him, or even deliver his petition.

Flesh flies live on corruption. Grub-street had unanimously resolved to turn a penny by the major. About a week before his death, a street pamphlet was published, entitled *The*

Weight of Blood : being the Case of Major John Oneby. It was a catch-penny, containing merely the trial from the Sessions paper, part of a sermon upon duels by a Mr. Hales of Eton, and Sir Richard Steel's Theatre, No. 26, on the same subject. By the pamphleteer himself there were only three or four short paragraphs. The remarks that especially affronted the major were these :

"... But as to Oneby, 'tis greatly to be feared that as he lived a profligate he will die a reprobate, having declared since his conviction that neither his confinement nor his crime ever gave him so much uneasiness as his cursed garters (as he is pleased to call his fetters). After sentence was pronounced, this bravo showed outward marks of a very great internal shock."

The ragged garrettee who wrote this street chap-book had actually the boundless impudence to visit the major in Newgate, to inform him, as a friend, that such a work was in the press, and suggesting that, as it might retard or prevent a reprieve, the author had better be bought off. In case the major could not be squeezed, and refused to become a milch cow, the eminent author probably thought he might, in that case, at least collect from the turnkeys or his own observation some facts to heighten the seasoning of his work. No money was, however, to be drawn, and the worthy descendant of Curll left. When the major read the book, and discovered that the author and his visitor were one and the same, he flew into a stormy rage, and cursed and swore even in the presence of the ordinary. He then tried several stratagems to decoy the poor author into Newgate; but the eminent author was shy, and Oneby's efforts proved ineffectual. It preyed upon him, however; and only three days before his death he said he desired but one thing in the world, and that was to have the satisfaction of taking leave of that rascally fellow with a sound whip : so sensitive can a scoundrel be to a form of scoundrelism to which he is unaccustomed !

Soon after this, the doomed man's violent and inflammable temper had another trial from a selfish and ungrateful world. An obsequious undertaker came one morning into the press-yard at Newgate, and sent in the following letter :

"Honoured Sir. This is to inform you that I follow the business of an undertaker in Drury-lane, where I have lived many years, and am well known to several of your friends. As you are to die on Monday, and have not, as I suppose, spoke to anybody else about your funeral, if your honour shall think fit to give me orders, I will perform it as cheap and in as decent a manner as any man alive.

"Your honour's unknown humble servant,
"G. H."

The burst of rage into which the major broke reached the undertaker in the press-yard, and he fled in dismay. He still continued to write letters to persons of distinction he had seen or

spoken to when in the army, to intercede for him; but all in vain. On the Saturday he learnt that his petition had been presented and refused. He was gloomy, but obdurate; he showed no fear, and expressed no sorrow. The noise of the Saturday night's market rose round Newgate, the flare of the huxters' lanterns and grease-pans gleamed into the condemned cells. The major went to bed about ten, as usual. At four on the Sunday morning, about daybreak, when all was still, the condemned man woke up the turnkey, Hooper, who was in his room, and called for a glass of brandy-and-water. The old drunkard's thirst was on him, and he seemed low and depressed. He then raised himself in his heavy-curtained bed, and, getting pen and ink, wrote out his last will and testament; for the noose, ready knotted, was lying already in steep for him in the press-room, and the hangman was perhaps at that very moment dreaming of his fees and of the coming job. He wrote his will; it was brief enough; he had nothing to leave but his frayed, wine-splashed, cut coat, his tarnished sword, some false dice, and a pack of prepared cards :

"Cousin Turvill, give Mr. Ackerman, the turnkey below-stairs, half a guinea; and Jack, who waits in my room, five shillings. The poor devils have had a great deal of trouble with me since I have been here."

The major only requested Jack and his watchers to go outside and be silent, as he wanted to compose himself against the coming of his friends. He drew his curtains carefully, and the men fell asleep again. The silence was unbroken till about seven, when his footman entered the room to call him. The major called out faintly, as if half asleep :

"Who is that ? Philip ?"

Soon after, a friend (probably Cousin Turvill, almost his only friend) came in, and, going to his bedside, called several times "Major ! Major !" but getting no answer, he at last drew back the dingy curtains. The bed was streaming with blood ; it lay everywhere in coagulated pools on the counterpane. The wretched man was dying. He had balked the hangman of his fees. A surgeon was sent for ; Hooper ran like a madman for him. Philip stanchd a deep gash in the wrist, which the desperate man had cut with the penknife he had mended the pen with that had made his will.

A TALE WITH A STRIKING MORAL.

I.

THE summer of 1865 was notable for such a perpetual blaze of sunshine, that the demand on all hands for umbrellas was nearly as great as if the season had been a rainy one.

On the evening of one of the fiercest of the fierce days of July, two young people were sauntering round the quays of Marseilles, enjoying some whiffs of air which found their way at rare intervals from the Mediterranean. Nearly the entire population was abroad that evening, gashing for those few whiffs.

Bearing in mind the heat and the degree of languor engendered by it, it was curious to observe with how much of energy our young couple spoke. Monsieur Pierre Grandal and Mademoiselle Eugénie Beaucour were a well-looking couple. As, in the course of their walk along the quay, they came under the light of the lamps, it was possible to see, to some extent, what they were like. Pierre Grandal was a promising young fellow enough to look at; tall and well grown, with energy and good humour conspicuous in his physiognomy. He belonged, as did the young girl by his side, to the bourgeoisie.

Among other things which the lamps revealed was the fact that Mademoiselle Beaucour was, considering that bourgeois origin of hers, very smartly dressed. Too smartly, perhaps. She was habited according to the mode of that particular season. Metallic coruscations were observable in her bonnet, which was as small as possible, and of a frail and perishable fabric. Her silk jacket, too, was be-bugled and laced to a wicked extent, and, terrible to relate, there was something trailing behind her in the Marseilles dirt, which bore some sort of resemblance to a train. It was too bad. Old Beaucour was in the wine and spirit trade, and was said to have feathered his nest tolerably; but in spite of all that, Mademoiselle Eugénie was got up on a scale that caused neighbouring matrons to shake their heads. This very "get up" was the subject of conversation between our two young people at the moment when we began listening.

"Now, look here, Eugénie," young Monsieur Grandal was saying at this particular juncture, "you do acknowledge—don't you?—that, considering all things, you are rather a fine lady?"

"I don't know what you mean," retorted mademoiselle.

"Well, I mean that your habits of life are ever so little extravagant, don't you think?—your style of dressing, for instance——"

"Yes; my style of dressing?" echoed the young lady in a tone which suggested that poor Monsieur Pierre was on hazardous ground.

"Your style of dressing," repeated Pierre. "Is it not rather expensive?"

"I cannot dress like a *femme de chambre*," replied the young lady, "to please anybody."

A pause; for Pierre Grandal had something to gulp down before continuing the conversation. It was rather an unpleasant one, and it seemed almost a pity to spend that evening in pursuing it. For this opportunity of talking to Eugénie, to some extent in private, was one such as seldom fell to the lot of our youngster. In France young ladies are more carefully watched than they are in our own country.

Pierre Grandal and Eugénie Beaucour had known each other from the time when they were children, their respective parents being old friends; but even under these circumstances it was an uncommon thing for them to be able to speak to each other alone. This very walk along

the quays was not a solitary ramble; old Monsieur Beaucour and his wife being in attendance not far off, and a younger brother, the inevitable *ami de college boy*, in a semi-military dress, being also of the party.

"Eugénie," said Monsieur Pierre, and his voice was troubled, for he felt that a crisis of some sort was at hand, "no one wants you to dress like a *femme de chambre*, but it is possible to be a little economical in your dress, without doing anything of the sort. Does there not exist any one to please, for whom you would consent to be more moderate?"

"I know of no such person," answered Eugénie, haughtily.

"Eugénie," continued Monsieur Grandal, warming as he spoke, "have you heard of this new thing that has taken place at Marseilles? Have you heard that the men of the town have banded themselves together, to bring about such a change in the existing state of things as that marriage shall become possible to men of moderate means? Eugénie, this STRIKE, as it is called, is not a thing originating in pique or malice, but in sheer self-defence. What can men do who are in the position which I have mentioned? They are not people of fortune—not even what society calls gentlemen. They cannot keep a host of servants to attend to their wants. They require that their wives should keep house for them economically; that while a fortune has still to be made, there should be no extravagance in dress. Is all this so very dreadful?" continued Monsieur Pierre, observing a gesture of disapproval on the part of his companion. "And is there no one to please whom you would undertake to live some such a life as I have hinted at?"

Mademoiselle Eugénie was fairly out of patience. "No, I should think not," she cried, with a stamp of her foot. "And as to your Strike, I think you're all a set of conceited stingy wretches, fancying yourselves of much greater importance than you really are!"

"Don't include me, mademoiselle," urged Pierre, angrily. "I have not joined the Strike."

"Then I think," retorted the young lady, "that the best thing you can do is to repair that mistake, and join it as soon as possible."

"Your advice shall be taken, mademoiselle. Here are your papa and mamma; allow me to say 'bon soir.'"

And so they parted, Mademoiselle Eugénie to repair to her apartment, and there to give way to floods of tears, Monsieur Pierre to rush off to the head-quarters of the Strike to enrol himself as one of its most enthusiastic members.

II.

What a curious thing pride is! Mademoiselle Eugénie Beaucour spent the night which succeeded that evening walk upon the quays in bitter tears, while, as to Pierre Grandal, when he woke on the following morning, after a very brief and troubled sleep, and remembered that he

had joined the Strike, I believe that he felt very much inclined to pay another visit to the port, and drop quietly into deep water when nobody happened to be looking. What had he done? He had united himself to this band of young men, who had pledged themselves not to marry till a marked change had taken place in the habits of the young lady population of Marseilles. Extravagance in dress, general luxuriousness of life, crinoline, a certain arrogance of tone, total ignorance of domestic matters, and an inordinate love of pleasures of an undomestic sort—these were some of the subjects at issue between the young men and the young women of Marseilles, and till these should consent to reform their milliners' bills, to study housekeeping, and generally to come down a peg or two, the Strike was to continue, and the registrar of marriages was to enjoy a sinecure.

Pierre Grandal went about his avocations on that day, and on many subsequent days, in a very disconsolate frame of mind. He was so unhappy that he could not always hide his melancholy, and some of his friends, and especially such as were included among the United Strikers, rallied him. It was an unfortunate part of the thing, too, that he could not always avoid the company of Mademoiselle Eugénie as much as he could have wished. In the daytime, he had his business to attend to, and constant application kept him from thinking; but, in the evening, it was different. Meetings of the two families, from which Pierre could not always absent himself, were frequent. The agonies endured by our young friend on these occasions were very great. Till now he had never known how much he had admired Mademoiselle Eugénie; only now, when that little sort of understanding between them, which had once existed, was at an end. He began to curse his folly in having ever spoken to her on the subject of economy in dress. He accused himself of having been a meddling prig. He had been egged on to that step, if the truth must be told, by a certain married sister of his, who had represented to him that Mademoiselle Beaucour's style of dressing was altogether beyond her station, and would certainly prove the ruin of any man who should be rash enough to take her to wife. "Why could not my married sister keep her advice to herself?"

One evening he sat gnawing his moustache, watching Eugénie. She was in the coolest way imaginable working at her embroidery, and listening to the conversation of Sub-Lieutenant Lemorier, with his thin waist—curse him!

This young officer and his attentions had been the subject of many conversations; but, as the young lady had always laughed at the lieutenant in a very satisfactory manner, such discussions had ever terminated peacefully, and had left our friend Pierre feeling quite comfortable—a master of the situation. But now, everything was topsy-turvy, and the very position of the sub-lieutenant and of himself seemed

to be reversed. Mademoiselle Beaucour actually treated his rival with a certain consideration. She listened when he talked, which she had never done before. She laughed when he was facetious, which was still more wonderful. She patronised him, on the contrary, to a very great extent. At length this gallant officer began to give himself little victorious airs, and to think that his waist and his gummed moustache had done their work.

Sub-Lieutenant Lemorier had never joined the celebrated Marseilles Strike. He was a free man to do what he liked. Pierre was angry with himself for what he had done, and angry—now more than ever—with Mademoiselle Eugénie because she showed no signs of giving in, nor any, even the faintest, indication of regret at the loss of her lover. The only solace which was within reach of Monsieur Pierre was found in the society of those other members of the Strike with whom it was his custom to associate—for it was the practice of those gentlemen to hold frequent meetings, with the view of mutually shoring each other up, and sustaining each other in a firm adherence to the illustrious cause. Many great and remarkable sentiments found utterance when the members of the brotherhood met thus, in cafés or elsewhere.

"This movement of ours," a striker would remark on some one of these occasions, "cannot fail to attract universal attention. The eyes of Europe will be upon us."

There was a little man among the members of this band, whom an ironical destiny had cursed with the name of Legrand, an authority in all matters with which "le sexe" was connected. This small gentleman was much addicted to holding forth on the subject of the Strike.

"I like it," he said one night, when some of the strikers, our unhappy Pierre among them, were assembled at a certain café in the Rue Cannebière. "The Strike suits me well. The women are ready to devour one already. Long live the Strike!" said the little man, taking a sip of eau sucrée with a flourish.

A striker with a red nose and a crimson neck-ribbon, worn, perhaps, with a view to the subduction of the feature in question, remarked that it was his experience also that the sex had become infinitely amiable of late; a bachelor was overwhelmed with civilities since the Strike had been started.

"I am free to confess," continued the little man, "that with regard to the sex, I have never had much to complain of. I don't know how it is, but I believe I have a way with me which they like. Always full of complaisance, they are now, however, ready to fall at one's feet."

"Not all of them," thought poor Pierre; but he did not say anything.

"What I like about it is this," remarked a very young man indeed, who was possessed of two goggle eyes, a turned-up nose, and a fatuous mouth. "What pleases me is, that now we shall be able at last to RULE."

"I have always ruled," observed the little man, *sotto voce*.

The young man with the goggle eyes had a tongue too large for his mouth, and as persons thus gifted always like to hear themselves talk, he proceeded frothily enough.

"The result of my experience has ever been that Woman, being the inferior animal——"

"Certainly," interposed the little man.

"—is never so happy," continued the goggle-eyed striker, "as when she is ruled by MAN, her natural superior. This is a truth which has been too much lost sight of. Woman has become too much exalted in the social scale. This will be so no longer. Henceforth," said the young man, rolling his eyes in terrible consciousness of power, "she is subjugated, she is conquered."

"I observe, gentlemen," remarked Pierre, who had not spoken before, "that you all appear to have had great success with the ladies, and that you seem to have found them very easy to manage. Now, with me, I confess it has been different. I have always found this sex, which we call weak, and gentle, and soft, to have resources of their own of no contemptible sort, and especially a power of holding out when once their pride is assailed, which makes me sometimes doubt the ultimate success of the Strike itself."

These remarks met with much opposition. No one would hear a word in disparagement of this great movement.

"But we can't strike for ever," urged Monsieur Pierre, still full of misgivings.

"We have no intention of giving in," cried several strikers, speaking at once.

"Well, then, suppose the other case," Grandal went on. "Suppose *they* give in, or at any rate profess to give in, and then when we, satisfied with our victory, come also to terms, what may not happen then? I confess that I view our position with alarm."

The members of the fraternity rose up in arms in a moment. Monsieur was an alarmist. He overrated the power possessed by the opposite sex. He underrated the superior force of MEN. Monsieur Legrand stood on his toes.

"The fact is," broke in the little man, "that our friend is evidently unfortunate. It has not been his habit to triumph in these amiable contests with the ladies, in which we are all sometimes involved. With me it has been different. It is, I suspect, a question of eye entirely. There is a certain power of eye which *some* men possess, before which women quail."

There was a big, powerful man, with a bushy beard, seated at an adjoining table to that belonging to the strikers. He was playing at dominoes with his little boy, and seemed to be much amused by the conversation of the brotherhood, and especially by the remarks which came from the very young man with the goggle eyes. Indeed, he appeared to have the greatest difficulty in restraining his laughter.

"Come," said the powerful man, addressing his son. "Come, Adolphe. It has struck ten.

We must go home, or we shall get a scolding from mamma. Good evening, gentlemen," he continued, addressing the brotherhood. "I've been married some years, and I don't think you'll find your Strike answer."

There was a great noise and chattering kept up among the strikers after this interruption, and it was some time before they returned to their usual dignified style of conversation.

When they did get back to it, it was perhaps on a bigger scale than ever. The little man said that their neighbour was a melancholy specimen of the hen-pecked tribe—most hen-pecked men, by-the-by, *were* big, or vice versa.

A gentleman with a red nose and redder cravat corroborated these sentiments, as, indeed, did all the other strikers who happened to be present. In fact, these powerful gentlemen ended in being quite uproarious in their great consciousness of strength.

Yet, when our friend Pierre got to be alone again, it must be acknowledged that all his lowliness of spirits returned in redoubled force.

III.

One morning Madame Beaucour was surprised by an application from her daughter, so unexpected that it took her breath away.

"Mamma," the young lady began, "is Louise going to the market this morning?"

"Yes, dear child; she is going as usual."

"Mamma, I should like to go with her."

"You—why, Eugénie, what are you thinking about?" replied Madame Beaucour, with wide-open eyes.

"I have taken it into my head," said Eugénie, smiling.

Of course she had her way, though madame, who was for keeping her daughter in cotton, did all she could to dissuade her.

"What can have come over the child?" said the worthy lady, in colloquy with her husband, after Eugénie had departed. "It is so unlike her character to want to engage in an occupation of the sort. And now I think of it, Monsieur Beaucour, she was dressed in a manner altogether at variance with her usual style. She had on old things of last year, which I thought she had given away long ago. What can it all mean?"

Monsieur Beaucour shrugged his shoulders.

"Des caprices," he said, in a resigned tone; "des caprices!"

Meanwhile, the young lady and the old servant had started on their expedition; the latter being nearly as much astonished at this strange freak as Madame Beaucour herself had been. She was more suspicious, though. "There is something underneath it all," she said to herself.

"Louise," said mademoiselle, as they walked along side by side, "I have been thinking a little, and I have come to the conclusion that a young girl ought to learn something about housekeeping, marketing, and that sort of thing."

"Ah, that's it, is it?" retorted Louise, dryly.

"Yes," replied the young lady, "and so I shall want you to tell me what is the proper price to give for things, and how one is to know when they are good of their kind, and, in short, all about it."

Louise was a difficult person to deal with. "Mademoiselle will find it a long business," she remarked.

"Still it can be done?"

"Oh yes, no doubt it can be done," was the cautious reply; and then, after a pause, "Mademoiselle has put on her old things?"

"Yes; this is not an occasion when one should be too smart."

"There is something underneath it all," persisted Louise.

The pair had by this time arrived at the scene of the morning's operations, and our young lady did, indeed, find that Louise's occupation was by no means a simple one. Her lesson had begun, however, and she was attentive. The first thing to be done in these cases, as it appeared to Eugénie, was to assume an air of extreme discontent, or even ferocity, to disparage every article which was exposed for sale, and to appear as if not wanting any one of them. "I don't like any of these things, but, if a tolerable specimen—such as, by the way, I don't see—came in my way, at a very low price indeed, it is just possible, perhaps, that I might be tempted." Now, Louise did not say all this in so many words, but her bearing and the aspect of her countenance said it quite plainly nevertheless. This was the first observation made by Mademoiselle Eugénie. She was next struck by the variety and number of the tests applied by the old servant to any object which she contemplated buying. Suppose, for instance, she had to purchase a fowl: after scrutinising several fowls, as they lay in rows on the shelves of the poultry-stall, she would select one at last with a sigh, and, weighing it in her hand, would again sigh, and shake her head gloomily; that done, she would poke the animal severely about the breast and wings with her fore-finger; then she would turn it over, and disparage its back; then she would open one of the deceased's eyes, and scrutinise the glazed organ closely; moreover, she would next force the creature's beak open, and gaze down its throat; finally, she would smell the body all over, and, depositing it again upon its shelf, would look casually at more poultry, as if she had given up all idea of the bird which she had been examining so carefully. But, after a while, she returned to it, as if in despair of finding anything better, and would condescend to ask its price. This would, however, not be named till the proprietor of the bird had uttered a panegyric on its merits: "It was the best fowl in the market; she was not sure that by rights it was for sale; she believed that madame, the wife of the prefect, expected it." At last, after many repetitions of the original question, the price would be named.

The signal this for such a disturbance as com-

monly attends continental bargaining:—screams, maledictions, vituperations, rushings away, reluctant comings back again, reductions of five centimes, of ten centimes, appeals to Heaven, denunciations, five centimes more off; last appeals, resolutions fixed, resolutions unfixed again; finally, amicable settlement, threepence-halfpenny English saved upon the bargain, and a fowl for dinner.

It was the same with everything; not a lettuce, not a radish without the same tests, the same screamings, the same denunciations, the same rushings away, and the same reluctant comings back. Noise, confusion, uncertainty, haggling all over and over again at every fresh purchase, and everybody fearfully in earnest. This veteran, Louise, would come away from a turnip triumph as elated as if she had won a queendom.

It must be acknowledged that Mademoiselle Beaucour came back from her first experience of marketing a good deal daunted. "And this," she said to herself—"this is the sort of thing which these conceited bachelors of Marseilles expect us to do, is it? I am to tuck up my skirts—of a cheap material, too, mind—and to put on a thick pair of shoes, and go out in all weathers, with an umbrella, and fight for centimes with old women for half a morning together; and I am to look down the throats of the fowls, and to sniff at bunches of turnips, and poke at the mutton, and pinch the pears, because these stingy bachelors don't choose to keep the proper number of servants to do all these things for one. 'Don't choose,' she repeated to herself, meditatively. "Perhaps they can't help themselves. I never thought of that." And with that she fell to thinking.

Mademoiselle Eugénie had not found that expedition with Louise very agreeable, then. Still she took no one into her confidence on the subject. Next day and the next, and for many subsequent days, she was ready at the proper time, and Louise would at last as soon have thought of starting without mademoiselle as without her basket. The good woman's suspicions, however, were not allayed. She still said to herself, "There is something underneath it all;" just as the philosophical Monsieur Beaucour always had the same answer ready for madame whenever she began to speculate on the change in their daughter's habits: "Des caprices, Madame Beaucour, des caprices, toujours!"

And so at last it was brought about that Mademoiselle Eugénie became such a proficient in bargaining, by dint of much practice and severe study, that she took to doing the marketing on her own responsibility, and Louise's functions were finally reduced to carrying the basket, and offering occasional advice.

Now it came to pass, that one morning our friend, Monsieur Pierre Grandal, after passing a restless night, got up betimes, and took it into his head that before going to his labours he would refresh himself with a walk round the

market-place. In France there are flowers, as well as vegetables and fruit, exposed for sale on these occasions, and the scene on market-day is not a little picturesque. Monsieur wandered about among the stalls, listlessly enough, till he came at last to one where a young person, as the French idiom expresses it, with a servant bearing a basket by her side, stood with her back towards him, cheapening some very nice-looking lettuces.

It is the custom, on the stage, for a gentleman dressed in all respects as usual, to borrow some friend's cloak for purposes of disguise, and wrapping it round about him, to become instantly unrecognisable by his most intimate friends. Yet, in real life, a disguise is a very difficult thing to achieve. Certain it is, that in spite of the humble garments in which this fair lettuce-cheapener was attired, young Monsieur Grandal had no sooner set eyes upon her back, than he could have sworn to her confidently; and this even if he had not heard her voice uttering such dulcet and harmonious sounds (though it was only being exercised about centimes and cabbages), that if mademoiselle had known that Monsieur Pierre was listening to her, she could not have spoken in a more fascinating tone, or shown a keener power of making a bargain. Perhaps she did know that our young friend was in the neighbourhood; but she certainly evinced the greatest surprise when she turned round and saw him. Meeting under such circumstances, these two young people forgot for a moment their sulks, and began to talk.

That conversation had important consequences. The Strike, as far as Monsieur Grandal was concerned, was entirely at an end. *She* had abdicated. She had seen the error of her ways. She had not thought seriously of life before, but now it was obvious to her that it really did behove the wife of a young man with his way to make in the world, to be economical, to dress plainly.

"No, no," cried her companion, generously, ready now to concede on his side.

"Yes, yes," Mademoiselle Eugénie went on; "to dress plainly, or, at any rate, to keep such finery as she might possess for great occasions; while, as to amusements, they were very well now and then, at rare intervals; but the fact was, they lost their attractiveness by too frequent repetition. Domestic pleasures were, doubtless, the best after all, and as to the others, they should be reduced——"

"No, no," again remonstrated the happy Pierre.

"Well, at most, the play three or four times a year, if circumstances were very propitious."

Pierre Grandal could hardly believe his ears. He saw himself now exonerated from the bonds in which that dreadful Strike had held him; for had not Eugénie fairly capitulated? There was, in fact, now no longer any obstacle to the marriage. Our ex-striker sought the inevitable interview with the Père Beaucour, and, that gentleman's consent having been obtained,

the necessary preliminaries to the great ceremony were set about without delay. The ceremonies which belong to, and which precede, the solemnisation of matrimony in France are numerous and elaborate. With these, however, it is fortunately not needful to trouble the reader. Enough for us, that they were all duly observed, and that the sun shone upon the bride to the heart's content of every one.

IV.

That honeymoon excursion which is so inevitable a part of the English wedding, is by no means considered equally indispensable on the other side of the Channel. In bourgeois society especially it is common enough for the bride and bridegroom to spend the honeymoon at home among their friends, receiving visits, repaying them in due time, and in every way leading quite a public life.

Our young couple then sat up in state, as became their position, and the bourgeoisie, in Sunday clothes, rallied round them with compliments and set phrases adapted to the occasion, such as the reader will find, if he likes to look for them, in certain French publications on the etiquette to be observed in connexion with weddings.

The Grandal couple were strictly in order in all these social matters, and young madame was pronounced on all sides to be quite a model bride, doing nothing—to use a familiar but not very correct expression—all day, and dressing up in a succession of toilettes, which the initiated pronounced to be "ravishing."

Well, for a time, this was all very satisfactory. It was not to be expected that madame, in the full glory of her new title, should trouble herself about household matters, or should ever make her appearance clad in any but the most distinguished garments. Silks, and lace, and the shawl of matronhood were indispensable. The newly married lady would have disappointed all her female friends if she had not given them living evidence that the fashion prints in the *Gazette Rose* were possibilities, not mere brilliant chimeras emanating from the brain of some art-genius.

But as time passed, and our young couple began to settle down into the ordinary routine of life, it began to strike Monsieur Pierre Grandal as a curious circumstance, that his young wife showed no symptoms of any intention of descending from the position of bride to that of housewife, which her recent studies under our old friend Louise had fitted her to fill. Not only did our newly made bourgeoisie altogether abstain from marketing, but she seemed to think it beneath her to give even the necessary directions to the servant on whom this duty devolved, or to mix herself up in any way whatsoever with the sordid cares of economical housekeeping. Everything was left to the *bonne*, and results more curious than satisfactory ensued.

Nor was this all. Nothing could exceed the

voracious appetite for amusements, of all kinds exhibited by madame since her marriage. The friends of both husband and wife did, as the Hints on Etiquette demanded of them, provide a certain amount of evening recreation for our young couple; réunions at which there was something done in the way of card-playing, of games, of music, of conversation—the company separating at an early hour, after partaking of sundry cakes and innocent beverages. But this sort of dissipation was not enough for our young lady. There is a theatre of considerable pretensions at Mar-seilles, and madame demanded (attention is requested to the word) to be frequently escorted by her husband to that place of entertainment, the demand not to be refused, on pain of—alas! an amount of pouting which drove the unfortunate Pierre to the verge of distraction. And then madame's tantrums were of such a peculiar sort! In the midst of her sulks; or when her husband had got to be panic-stricken, she would burst out suddenly into a fit of laughing, at which the honest man was more frightened than ever.

One day Monsieur Pierre ventured on a mild remonstrance. He had been looking into his accounts, and had discovered that the goings out and the comings in were not harmonious. There were discrepancies. Laxity in the housekeeping arrangements, continual visits to the theatre, carriage-hire, which such visits rendered indispensable—these, and the ravishing toilets of madame, were running away with the limited income of our friend, after a fashion which terrified Monsieur Pierre not a little. In fact, he was lashed up at last to such desperation, that speech, ay, even though it should lead to unpleasantness, was a relief which must be had.

"Look here, cherished one," he began. "I have been looking into money matters, and I find that we are spending too much. We must become more economical."

"More economical!" echoed the lady. "Why, we spend nothing as it is."

"There will soon be nothing to spend," replied Monsieur Grandal. "You never—never go to market now. Before you were married—"

"Before I was married, monsieur, it was different. A young girl is one person, and a married lady is altogether another. I am not going to compromise myself by haggling in the market now, I can tell you."

"Why, Eugénie," groaned her husband, in simple consternation, "is this you?"

"Silence, sir!" screamed the lady; and then she went off into hysterics, but whether of tears or laughter, poor Monsieur Pierre could not make out. So he gave it up, and went away out of the house; but his back was hardly turned, before madame jumped up from her sofa, and running across to where a photograph of her husband hung against the wall, began to kiss the portrait with all her might. Then she went into the bedroom and kissed his robe-de-chambre, and

even his slippers, and "Oh, my darling, my darling," she cried, "I can't, indeed—I can't keep it up much longer, though I have promised all the young girls of our quarter to take this terrible vengeance."

Pierre wandered about for a time disconsolate, and then he thought that he would go back. It must have been a fit of momentary irritability. He knew Eugénie better than to suppose that she was really what she appeared to be now.

But when he got home full of intentions of reconciliation, there was nobody to be reconciled to. "Madame had gone out," the bonne said. "She had gone out with a gentleman—with Lieutenant Lemorier, in fact. She had not mentioned when she should return."

To our unfortunate friend this intelligence was wormwood. He had gone back to his home with much to say. He wanted to have some explanation. It was impossible to rest, so he got up and went out again, fretting and chafing. "To have gone out with that hateful fellow, too—it was intolerable." Thus he wandered about the town. His expression of countenance was not a joyous one probably. Certain members of the Strike saw him, and nudged each other facetiously. "Our friend does not look happy," they said; "he has been taken in. He should have kept with us." At last, as it got near dinner-time, Pierre went back to his home. "She had arrived by this time?" But the bonne said, "No, madame had not appeared."

We all know what waiting is. Pierre waited and waited, and fretted and fumed. The servant came in and proposed dinner, but her master would not hear of it. By-and-by he went out, to the abode of his wife's parents. Had they heard or seen anything of Eugénie?

Nothing.

He came back. It was dark now. Again the bonne besought him to take food, and again he refused. Sitting at the window, and looking out, then getting up and pacing the room, then to the window again, that was how he passed the evening.

At last it struck eleven. He would take some decided steps. As he approached the outer door, there was a ringing at the bell. He opened the door himself, and his wife stood before him.

"Are you going out?" she asked, calmly, observing that he had his hat on.

"I was going out," answered Pierre. "Where have you been, Eugénie?" he added, when they got into the salon.

"I have been at a concert," was the careless reply.

"In company with Monsieur Lemorier?" was the next question.

Madame Grandal assented. She did not add, though, that the sub-lieutenant's married sister and her husband had also been of the party.

Grandal was silent for a while. "Eugénie," he said at last, "it is time that this ended, and it must end. What does your conduct

mean? I no longer recognise you. Are you mad?"

"Mad," she laughed scornfully. "Not in the least."

"Then if you are sane," continued her husband, "give me a reasonable answer. What are you doing? What do you mean by your present conduct?"

Eugénie did not answer for a moment. There was a curious movement about her mouth. At last she stammered out, "that she supposed, if her husband was alluding to the concert, that a married woman could go where she liked, and in such company as pleased her. She did not understand what he complained of." She spoke with her head turned at this time, and in rather a strange voice.

"Complain—complain of?" echoed her husband. "Have I not cause to complain? How are you fulfilling the promise that you made? Since the day of your marriage, what has your life been? Has so much as one single thought been given to your home duties? Your extravagance in dress, has it not been greater than ever? Have you not seemed to speculate as to how you could involve me in expenses that should be beyond all measure and reason? Have you not pursued pleasure in a degree that has been outrageous and inexcusable, and now, dissatisfied with what I have provided for you in this way, you have gone away from me, putting yourself under the charge of another, making your husband—a fool before all the world?"

Madame Grandal did not speak. There seemed to be a strange conflict going on within her.

"And this," added her husband, "after persuading me that you were an altered being."

"Deception—all deception," cried the girl at last, the words coming from her with a sort of fury in them. "Deception, and a cheat. What! did you, or any of that wretched band which you were got to join, suppose that you were to be a fit match for a woman if she chose to play the game against you? Oh!" there were tears in her eyes now, though there was contempt in her words. "Oh, with what follies did you please yourselves, you and the others—with what self-complacent sophistries did you nurse that pride of yours! How you gloried in your fancied strength and in our fancied weakness." Her sobs stopped her here for a moment, but quickly she spoke again. "And putting thus all manliness and all real strength away from you, could you not guess that something of added power would be given to those weak opponents whom you despised—that what you lost, would certainly be gain to them." Again she paused, unable, as it seemed, to go on, because of her failing voice.

"Yes," she continued at last, "you put from you what of right belonged to you—forbearance,

perseverance, patience. Were not those the real signs of strength? In what indeed does strength lie but in these? Is strength shown in a fight with women—using such weapons as might belong to them, not those which were alone manly, and to which—to which—she would alone succumb." Again she stopped, but no interruption came from her husband, and presently she went on once more:

"Was it good," she asked, speaking more quietly, "to lose your patience and forbearance, those real signs of strength, and suffer yourselves to be drawn into this—this—brawl with women? Was it good to speak to me as you did at first? Dictating to me as to an enemy, not appealing to the reason of a friend?"

She stopped and seemed to wait for her husband's answer. He was pondering with downward glance, as if some thought had been presented to him, now, for the first time.

"It was not good," he said, slowly. She was by his side in a moment. "Oh, Pierre," she cried, "do you really mean those words?"

"And so you have been playing me a trick all this time?" he said, taking her hand; "was that good, Eugénie?"

Madame Grandal looked down, a little abashed.

"And your marketing expeditions, your saving up of your finery, your experiments in domestic economy—all was a sham, was it?"

"Yes," replied the girl; "but then," she added quickly, "so was the other."

"What other?"

"Why, all that has happened since our marriage! Yes, all to plague you, and to bring you to acknowledge—"

"To acknowledge what?"

"Why, what you have just owned, that the STRIKE was a failure from beginning to end. But, Pierre," she added, "there is one great difference between the two pieces of acting."

"And what is that?" asked her husband.

"Why, that the last—the hateful part—the part of the cruel, heartless woman, with objects of her own to attain, in perpetual opposition to her husband, separating her interests from his; that shameful rôle, the very acting of which in sport has made me hate myself, is discarded and abandoned henceforth, to be taken up no more for ever; while the other—the character of the faithful housewife; the friend, not the enemy of her life-partner; his ally, not his antagonist—this part shall be repeated every day till that great curtain descends which, sooner or later, brings all our performances to an end!"

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MABEL'S PROGRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

BOOK VI.

CHAPTER I. HOW JACK FOUND A PATRON.

MABEL's brightest dreams of success in the art she had chosen were more than realised. The second character she appeared in—Beatrice, in *Much Ado About Nothing*—charmed the town. Juliet had afforded no scope for the display of a certain buoyant playfulness of manner which belonged to her, and which robbed the saucy sallies of the brilliant Beatrice of all bitterness whilst preserving their point and sparkle. And then her tenderness and indignation on behalf of her wronged cousin, and the half tearful, half fiery, wholly womanly and passionate manner in which the famous "Kill Claudio!" was delivered, were pronounced by the critics to be quite admirable. Mr. Alaric Allen was in high content. His theatre was crowded nightly; and the audiences showed no symptoms of falling off, even though the end of the London season was rapidly approaching. Mabel was re-engaged for the following year at an increased salary. Her income was already a large one.

"I am growing quite a rich woman, mamma!" said Mabel; and then she gave a little sigh.

Her life outside the theatre was quiet and uneventful. She and her mother and Dooley lived in as retired a manner in the pretty cottage at Highgate as though Miss Bell, the brilliant actress, the idol of the public, the magnet that attracted admiring crowds to the Royal Thespian Theatre night after night, were a personage utterly unknown to them. Opportunities were not wanting, had she been minded to avail herself of them, of shining in society as the lion of the season, the latest novelty, the spoiled child of the public for the passing hour; but Mabel would have none of this. Without any romantically high-flown notions as to the exalted character of her art, and regarding it chiefly, as she did, in the matter-of-fact light of an honourable means of employing her faculties to win a subsistence for herself and for those dear to her, she yet shrank from any such abasement of her profession as would have been involved in the acceptance of many of the invitations she received. She resented the implied assumption

that she, who amused vacant fine ladies and gentlemen, and cheated them into some fleeting ghost of an emotion on the stage, would be flattered by the honour of being permitted to gratify their more or less impertinent curiosity in their own drawing-rooms. Not that there were wanting kind words and pleasant encouragement from many persons whose rank was their least title to respect and honour; or still more precious opportunities of seeing and conversing with men and women illustrious in literature and art, the mere mention of whose names had made Mabel's pulse beat high in the days of her early girlhood, and had conjured up a crowd of deathless images. Still, on the whole, Mabel saw but little of the small great world of London that came to gaze at her, and criticise her, and admire her from its cushioned stalls.

"It is very odd to me, Mabel," said Mrs. Saxelby one day to her daughter, "that you don't seem to be a bit less shy than you were at fifteen. Nay, upon my word, I think you are absolutely more shy now than you were then!"

"I think I absolutely am, mamma. But why does that seem so very odd to you?"

"Why? Good gracious, Mabel, is it *not* very odd? You, so admired and successful, and accustomed to be the cynosure of all eyes for so many hours night after night, is it *not* very odd that you should shrink from strangers like a bashful school-girl? To me it is incomprehensible, I confess."

"But, mamma, do you not see that it is not me, not my very self, whom those eyes are gazing at in the theatre?"

"Not you? What nonsense, my love!"

"No, mamma. It is Juliet, or Beatrice, or Imogen. I assume those characters of the poet's imagination, or, to speak modestly, my humble conception of those characters, precisely as I assume my stage costume. I put on, as it were, another individuality which conceals *me* like a mask. To all that crowd of strangers who fill the Thespian Theatre, Mabel Earnshaw is an utterly unknown personage, I assure you. You understand, mamma?"

Mrs. Saxelby did by no means understand.

"Umph! It is one of your fine-spun fancies, my darling," she said, smiling placidly, with a little self-satisfied consciousness of her own superior common sense.

"Perhaps so, mamma," said Mabel, "but

without some such fine-spun fancy I should never set my foot on the stage again."

It must not be supposed that in her prosperity Mabel was neglectful of Aunt Mary and her family. A constant correspondence was kept up between them, conducted chiefly by Janet and Mabel, although Mrs. Walton would send a letter, now and then containing all the family news, and Mrs. Saxelby occasionally covered an elegant monogram-surmounted sheet of paper with her delicate ladylike handwriting, which looked so singularly clear and regular, and was so provokingly difficult to decipher. The news from Dublin was extremely good. Polly and her husband were prospering greatly. Carlo Bensa had been made conductor of a society for the cultivation of vocal part-music, and had almost more teaching than he could manage. Uncle John was permanently engaged as a contributor to the scientific journal which had already accepted some of his papers on chemistry. Janet, as of old, was her father's faithful indefatigable amanuensis. But of Jack's prospects the accounts were positively brilliant. He had been painting and studying industriously, and, with such good results, that he intended to send a picture to the Academy next year. But this was not all; he had found a patron!—a patron who praised his pictures, and, moreover, *bought* them at a liberal price!—a patron who prophesied for Jack a high position amongst English landscape painters, and who had invited him to come and stay at his house in London. It was incredible good fortune; and Janet, who communicated the pleasant tidings, departed from the usual sober moderation that characterised her style to dilate upon the success which seemed at last about to crown her brother's cheerful steady perseverance. "And only think, dear Mabel," she wrote, "to whom we are indebted for having introduced this discerning person (*we* think him a miracle of acumen, and you will think so too, for Jack's sake) to our family! To dear old Captain Duff, in whose ship you came across to Ireland! Jack's *Mecænas* is a brother-in-law of the captain's, and a Scotchman like himself. He lives in London, and is in some trade or business there, and has plenty of money. But, what is better, he has the good taste to cultivate an acquaintance with the fine arts, has a well-chosen little collection of paintings, and is reckoned—Captain Duff says—a very competent judge of modern pictures. He is delighted with Jack's efforts, so he *must* be a competent judge, mustn't he? The first thing that struck him in Jack's portfolio was that pretty view on the river Clare, just above the town. I remember your telling me that you were studying Ophelia that morning while Jack was making his sketch. Have you forgotten? He bought it immediately, and gave Jack a commission for an oil painting; and what do you think Jack did when Captain Duff and his brother-in-law were gone? He is looking over my shoulder, and says I must not tell you, but I will, to let

you see that he is just the same harum-scarum Jack that you and I remember when we were children. Well, Mabel, the door had scarcely closed on our visitors when Jack came rushing up to the drawing-room, three stairs at a time, hugged mother and me frantically, danced round the table, and finally stood on his head and knocked his heels together! Don't you recollect how he used to frighten us by his acrobatic performances in the old days?"

The letter went on to say that, his services not being needed at the Dublin theatre for a few weeks, Jack would probably take a holiday and come over to London shortly. Mabel had written to Aunt Mary by return of post congratulating them all warmly on the good news, and saying that she and her mother should feel quite hurt if Jack installed himself under any other roof than theirs during his stay in London, and that his room should be prepared forthwith.

Dooley was highly excited on learning that "Cousin Dack" was expected, and set about making various arrangements for his entertainment—such as appropriating a certain number of square inches in his own particular garden-bed to Jack's use, and giving up his best wooden spade to the expected guest. He also collected together a perfect menagerie of legless, headless, and otherwise mutilated wooden animals, which Jack was to mend and paint into renewed beauty. "Dack may have my ninepins to pay wis. Do 'oo sink Dack likes ninepins?" said Dooley, with much earnestness, and was greatly gratified on being assured that Jack would doubtless derive exquisite enjoyment from that amusing game. At length one morning a ring was heard at the garden gate of Desmond Lodge, Highgate, and Jack, carrying his modest valise in his hand, was ushered into the little hall. His cousin received him affectionately, and Mrs. Saxelby with the soft gracious urbanity that became her so well.

"Dear old Jack!" cried Mabel, holding both his hands, "the sight of your bright pleasant face is gude for sair een, as Captain Duff would say."

"But how did you come? Where is your luggage?" asked Mrs. Saxelby, with the very slightest flavour of patronage in her tone.

"My luggage? Oh, that little valise in the hall constitutes my 'luggage,' Mrs. Saxelby. And I walked here from the corner of the lane where the humble 'bus put me down. I arrived in London last evening, but I would not disturb you so late. I knew Mabel would be at the theatre, so I took a bed at an hotel, and went to the Thespian to see Miss Bell as Beatrice. And didn't I feel just proud sitting there in the pit, when the audience expressed its opinion in the unmistakable manner to which I suppose Miss Bell is tolerably well accustomed by this time! And didn't I wish mother could have been there to see it and hear it, bless her heart!"

There was so much to be told on both sides, and so many discursive episodes in their talk,

that the morning slipped away with wonderful rapidity. Dooley did the honours of the garden, and, half shyly half proudly, showed Jack the arable land set apart for him, and the garden-tools wherewith to cultivate it.

"I tell you what, Dooley," said Jack, contemplating the little bed of earth with a gravity that delighted the child, who watched him furtively with sidelong wistful looks, "I tell you what, this is a light soil, I fancy, and we must grow mustard-and-ress on it. That's the crop adapted to flourish here, you may depend."

Then the invalid menagerie was passed in review, and marvels in the way of surgery were effected. Jack produced a colour-box from the valise, and touched up horses, lions, camels, and cows, in a very striking manner. Dooley's favourite white charger was ornamented with sky-blue eyes and a rose-coloured mane and tail; and Dooley himself—in his zealous co-operation—bedaubed his hands and pinafore with all the hues of the rainbow.

At dinner, Jack announced his intention of calling on his new friend and patron that evening.

"And I shall have to go and stay at his place for a day or so," said he. "The old gentleman took a wonderful fancy to me, and made me promise to be his guest if ever I came to London. Only, when you were kind enough to write and say that you expected me to make your house my home—"

"Most happy," murmured Mrs. Saxelby.

"Though it seems almost a shame to quarter myself in this way—"

"Why, Jack!" exclaimed Mabel, with heightened colour, "what are you talking about? We were 'kind enough,' and 'a shame to quarter yourself'! I didn't think you could have been so unkind. Where should Aunt Mary's son be at home if not here? Aunt Mary, who fed me and clothed me and sheltered me when I was a helpless fatherless little child!"

Mrs. Saxelby put her handkerchief to her eyes.

"I beg your pardon, Mabel," said Jack, simply.

Dooley had laid down his little knife and fork, and was contemplating the scene attentively.

"Dive him a tiss, Tibby," said he, softly.

"Daak is sorry, isn't 'oo, Dack?"

Mabel smilingly bent forward and kissed her cousin's forehead; and Dooley resumed his dinner with a good appetite.

"And where does this gentleman live, Jack?" asked Mabel.

"Why—it's the oddest coincidence in the world—but he must be a neighbour of yours."

"A neighbour of ours? Really!"

"Yes; stay, here is his address. The Hawthorns, Desmond-lane, Highgate."

"Oh!" cried Mrs. Saxelby, "that is the pretty house over the way, Mabel. I know it well. I used to see a tall thin man with iron-grey hair going down the lane towards London punctually

at nine o'clock every morning. But latterly I have missed him."

"Yes; because he has been in Dublin on business. But he was to be in England again by this time."

"And his name, Jack? You have not told us his name."

"His name," said Jack, putting his notebook back into his pocket, "is Mc'Culloch."

CHAPTER II. SEEKING.

PENELOPE had been stirring so early that it was not yet eight o'clock when Clement went up to his brother's room, resolved to break to him the project of sending him abroad, and prepared for a very painful interview. He knocked at the door. There was no answer, and trying the handle it yielded at his touch, and he entered. The room was empty. The bed had been slept in, but was now untenanted, and some of Walter's clothes were scattered about the floor. Clement ran down-stairs again hastily.

"Penny!" he cried, "Penny, Walter is gone."

"Gone! Where?"

"He is not in his room. The bed is empty, and the door open. Come and see!"

They searched through the house—not a long process at De Montfort villas—but no Walter was to be found. And, finally, the little servant-of-all-work, with the rapid intelligence peculiar to her class, volunteered the statement that she thought Mr. Walter must be gone to the bank, for that she had seen him a-walking down the road to the place where the 'buses went from as she was a-coming to her work that morning.

"Why in the world did you not say so at once, Ann?" demanded Miss Charlewood, sharply.

To which query Ann's only response was a grimace compounded of a grin and a gasp, and expressive of such utter vacuity of mind that Penelope felt it to be useless to say more to her.

"It is odd, his going off in that manner!" said Clement. "It makes me uneasy."

"My impression is," observed Penny, "that on awaking this morning, and remembering the scene of last night, he felt so thoroughly ashamed of himself, and so afraid to face you, that he stole away, with the idea of avoiding an interview until your anger should have cooled a little. He'll sneak home this evening after banking hours, you may depend upon it."

After some discussion, they agreed that it must be as Penelope supposed, although neither of them could shake off a lurking anxiety which each endeavoured to conceal from the other.

"I will call at the bank for him on my way home," said Clement.

"For my part," said his sister, "I dread seeing mamma. What *are* we to say to her? And she must know the truth, must she not?"

"Oh, Penny, you remind me well—this wretchedness has driven everything else out of

my head. I think that I promised to call for my mother in Mayfair. I think, my dear, that you had better go there yourself and accompany her home. You need say nothing in Augusta's presence about this business. Only break it to mother on your way back. I shall have Walter on my hands."

So it was settled between them; and Clement betook himself to his office with a heavy heart.

Penelope's task was in truth a most painful one. Her brother had urged her to spare their mother as much as might be, and indeed she herself desired to be merciful if it were in any way possible to be so. But strong indignation fought with pity in her breast, and it required all her self-command to avoid reproaching her mother for the part she had played. The only vent she allowed to her feelings, however, was to abuse Walter, and this she did in no measured terms. Poor Mrs. Charlewood wept and moaned, and hid her face in her handkerchief, and confessed her own fault, and tried to palliate Walter's, all in a very piteous and humble manner.

"Don't ask pardon of *me*, mamma," said Penelope. "It is Clement, your good, true, noble son Clement, that you should ask forgiveness of. Or, at least—I—I—don't quite mean that *you* should ask forgiveness, mamma, but Walter—Walter ought to go down on his knees in the dust at his brother's feet. Thankless, hopeless, heartless wretch that he is!"

"Oh, Penny, Penny! Don't ye, my love. Don't ye say so!"

"But I must say so. It was not enough to disgrace us all by his conduct at the bank; not enough to drain his brother's pocket of every penny he had to pay his vile debts; not enough to pursue his own selfish course without one instant's thought or regard for his family; but when all was generously forgiven, when Clement had screened him, and saved him, and brought him home, and Walter had given his solemn word of honour—*his* honour!—to reform, and reward his brother's kindness and affection, he gets a false key to the door, and comes stealing into the house like a thief—yes, like a thief in the night—and acts a base, contemptible lie through every hour of the twenty-four."

And still Mrs. Charlewood sobbed and moaned, and cried plaintively, "Don't ye, Penny. Oh, *don't* ye say so, my love!" over and over again.

As the time drew near for Clement's return, the mother and daughter grew quieter, and sat silently listening, full of nervous anxiety, for the expected footsteps. The unfinished street they dwelt in was seldom disturbed by the noise of wheels, and very few foot passengers frequented it. Clement's quick decided tread could be heard distinctly on the gravel. The sun began to sink, and burnished the parlour window where Mrs. Charlewood and her daughter sat, making the former shrink, and shade her tear-swollen eyes.

"They're late," she said, almost in a whisper.

"Not very, mamma," replied Penelope, in-

stinctively adopting the same subdued tone. "I have known them to be a full half hour later than this."

Slowly the half hour went by, and Penelope was compelled to acknowledge that her brothers were now behind their usual time of reaching home. "Clem has the agreeable task to go through of telling a few stern truths to Mr. Walter Charlewood. That is detaining him. Poor Clem!"

Mrs. Charlewood's lips framed "Don't ye, my dear," but she uttered no sound. At length a noise of footsteps was heard approaching. They listened. Nearer and nearer came the tread.

"There's only one person!" exclaimed Mrs. Charlewood, trembling violently. "Only one!"

Penelope started up and ran to the street door.

Clement stood there alone. Penelope turned deadly pale at sight of his face. "Where's Walter?" she asked, with a strained assumption of her old hard manner, though her voice shook. "I suppose he refuses to return home at all now. That is the latest thing!"

Clement came into the passage and closed the door behind him. "Walter is not at the bank," he said; "has not been there all day. I have made inquiries at every place I could think of where they were likely to know anything of him. I went to his old lodgings near the Strand. All in vain. I do not know where he is."

"Clement!"

"Hush! Is mother there? I am going out again to search for him. But I thought I would come home first, or you would both be so alarmed at my prolonged absence."

The brother and sister entered the parlour together, and confronted Mrs. Charlewood standing opposite to the door. She was not crying now. Her face looked stern, almost menacing, as she fixed her eyes upon Clement.

"Where's my boy?" she asked, harshly.

"Mother dear, I have been seeking for him. He is playing us some trick. He will come home to-night—"

"Find my boy, Clement. Bring me my boy. Whatever he may be to others he's the child of my bosom, my latest born, the darling of your dead father. If any 'arm befalls him, you're answerable. Your cruelty has driven him away. Find my boy, I say, or woe be to you."

She seized her son's shoulder roughly as she spoke. Clement took her hand and passed one arm gently round her. "Mother, dear mother," he said, soothingly, "try to calm yourself. There is no cause for fear, please God. I will not rest night or day until I bring you your boy again."

The poor woman melted into tears, and fell sobbing on his breast. "Oh, forgive me, my son, my own good son," she cried; "I'm a foolish, wicked woman to speak so to you. But oh, Clem, you'll find my boy, won't you? You *will* bring me my boy."

Clement went forth again, and returned late at night, still without his brother. He had not

been seen or heard of in any of his accustomed haunts. "He may still return to-night," said Penelope. "It may be simply bravado, to show that he will not be controlled." They watched and waited until the grey dawned in the sky, but there came no tidings.

The next morning Clement went straight to his office. It was yet so early that there was no one there except an old woman employed in sweeping and dusting. Mr. McCulloch, who had been absent from town, was expected back that morning. Clement left a note for him, excusing himself from attendance at the office that day, and also a few written instructions to the subordinate clerks. As he went out, he saw the morning's letters lying on a desk. Among them was one directed in the handwriting of his anonymous enemy. He started as though he had been stung, and turned away his head. Then he stood a moment in the street, irresolute which way to direct his course. "I will try his old place once more," he said. "Some of his companions may be known there." And he went rapidly towards the dingy lodging-house in the Strand. The slatternly servant—whose tenure of office had been unprecedentedly long—was still there, but had given notice, and would leave to-morrow. She took care to inform Clement of this fact before she answered one of his inquiries, and added, superfluously enough, that mines of gold should not tempt her to remain another day.

"And you have not seen or heard anything of Mr. Charlewood since he left these lodgings?" asked Clement.

"Nothink at all, sir. Left 'em! Ah, an' I should like to know who'd stop in 'em as could provide themselves otherways? I wonder as the rats an' mice and the very black-beetles doesn't go, I do." The slatternly servant was evidently under a strong sense of injury, and rubbed the hearth-stone with which she was cleaning the door-step round and round as if she found some relief to her feelings in grinding it down spitefully.

"Then you can tell me nothing? I am very, very sorry. We are in great trouble respecting my brother, at home, and I should have been grateful for any information that might enable us to find him."

Clement had touched the right chord. The girl looked up with a ray of sympathy in her coarse face.

"In trouble, sir, are you? Law, now, I'm sure I'm very sorry, and if I knowed anything, I'd tell you in a minute. Oh my!" she exclaimed, after a moment's pause, clapping her hands together, "I wonder if she could give any information?"

"Who? Who, my good girl? For God's sake tell me at once!"

"Well, sir, it's a party as comes here sometimes to see a dressmaker as lodges in our attics. She bounced a good bit about knowing your family one day when she see you on the stairs. Not as I swallows quite everything as she says, sir. But she's been here once or

twice since your brother left, and allus talks as if she was quite intimate, like, with all on you."

"Met me on the stairs here? Do you mean a woman named Hutchins?"

"Yes, sir. That's her. But, as true as I'm here, I can't tell you where to find her, so it ain't much use after all!"

"I happen to know her address," said Clement, remembering his encounter with Corda. "But it is incredible that *she* should have any knowledge of my brother's whereabouts. However, it is a chance, and I'll try it. Thanks, my good girl."

He offered to slip a shilling into her hand, but she drew back and shook her head.

"I couldn't, indeed, sir, thank you all the same. I've got brothers and sisters of my own, and I couldn't do it, sir. I'm a going to the Eating 'Ouse next door, and if any time as you was passing you'd jist ask for Sarah and let me know as it was all right about young Mr. Charlewood, I should take it kind. He was a pleasant-spoken young gentleman."

Clement set off for that poor region he had traversed so recently in Miss Fluke's sweet society. He easily found the street, but it was a long one, and all the squalid little dwellings resembled one another. "I haven't the least idea of the number," said Clement to himself, and stood gazing about him. A door opened on the opposite side of the way, and a tall, round-shouldered man, with a paper cap on his head, and carrying a basket of tools, came out of it. "Come," thought Clement, "I owe Miss Fluke something. If she had not insisted in such an impressive manner that she knew that man's face, I should not have recollected it so distinctly. But that is Miss Fluke's acquaintance without doubt, and there is the house."

He crossed the street and knocked at the door. After some delay, it was opened by Mrs. Hutchins herself in an unexampled condition of untidiness, who uttered a faint exclamation, and changed colour when she saw Clement.

"Don't let me startle you," said Clement, looking at her keenly. "I have merely called to make a few inquiries of you."

Mrs. Hutchins stood with the door in her hand, and muttered something about not understanding what he meant.

"If you will allow me to come in for one moment, I will explain to you."

"I don't know about coming in, I'm sure," she answered, sulkily. "My 'usband ain't partial to strange faces."

"Your husband is not at home; I have just seen him leave the house," said Clement, making a guess.

"Well, an' if he is not at home! I suppose you don't think it shows a manly 'art to come and try to frighten one of the soft sex with your 'inquiries,' do you?"

"My good woman, you are strangely ill humoured. One would think you had done something to be ashamed of, you are so alarmed at the idea of an inquiry!"

Mrs. Hutchins's face grew visibly paler through the dirt that obscured it. "I—I—meant no offence, sir," she stammered, whinily.

"Very well. Since, however, you will not allow me to come into your house, I must ask what I have to ask on the door-step. I have some reason to suppose it possible that you may know where my brother, Mr. Walter Charlewood, is staying at present. I—I have mislaid his address," pursued Clement, with a sudden instinctive mistrust of the false face before him, "and I wish particularly to communicate with him without delay."

Mrs. Hutchins looked at him curiously, with her head on one side. "Oh," she said, slowly, "was *that* what you wanted to make inquiries about?"

"Yes; and I tell you plainly, that if you can give me any information—and I shrewdly suspect by your manner that you can—you had best do so at once."

"Had I really?" she returned, with rapidly returning self-possession. "And supposing I *can't* give you no information, what then, Mr. Charlewood?"

"Then I must seek it elsewhere. But you won't refuse to tell me where my brother is, if you know. It is very important that I should find him."

Mrs. Hutchins threw the door wide open, and pointed into the house as she had seen the indignant heroine do at a minor theatre. Any one who labours under the delusion that affectation is the exclusive property of fine ladies and gentlemen, would have been undeceived on beholding Mrs. Hutchins's behaviour. She turned her eyes on Clement with an expression of languid scorn.

"Search my 'ouse," she said, loftily. "Cry 'avoc on my very 'arthstone. Never blench, Mr. Charlewood. I am pore and lowly, and of course 'ave a right to be insulted."

"You foolish woman, I have no thought of insulting you. If you know where my brother is, say so in Heaven's name, without more ado. If not, it is useless to waste my time here any longer."

"Sir, I may be a foolish woman—thanking you for the compliment—but I do *not* know where your brother has betook himself to. How *should* I know? I'll ask you that, Mr. Charlewood, and doubtless in your superior wisdom you will frame a answer!"

"How should you know, indeed?" said Clement, with a sigh. "I came here on a forlorn hope, and God knows, I cannot tell where to turn to next." He walked away despondently, and quite insensible to Mrs. Hutchins's parting shot.

"Returning your polite salutes, sir, and don't mention the trouble you've gave, I beg!"

The woman watched him with an evil smile on her face. "Who sent him here, I wonder!" she said, pondering. "And how did he find me out? You're a nice genteel amiable gentleman, Mr. Clement Charlewood, and joy go with

you, for a stuck-up, proud, overbearing, low-minded—Ah, but there, sprung from the kennel, and what can we expect! It ain't the money as does it. In his rich days, he was always a low, plodding, vulgar fellow, and never took no notice of me in my own house. Whilst for heighth, and poetry, look at Alf! But it ain't," added Mrs. Hutchins, with modest candour, "it ain't every one as has my fine feelin's. I can't abear lowness. Nor yet meanness."

JOHN SKEEME, THE PROMOTER.

IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

My first acquaintance with Mr. Skeeme—he was in those days simply called Skeeme, without the prefix of Mr.—was about the year 1838 or '39. I had then a near relative, a bachelor, who was very well off, and was living in a very comfortable—an almost luxurious—small house in South Audley-street. He had an income of about three thousand pounds a year, was captain and lieutenant-colonel in a battalion of the Guards stationed in London, kept his brougham as well as a couple of riding-horses, and was, on the whole, what at the present day would be called a decided "swell." To this gentleman John Skeeme was valet and factotum; and as I—then a schoolboy—used to spend a portion of my holidays with my relative, I of course got to know his right-hand man. My cousin was very kind to me, and often took or sent me to the different theatres. When he could not go himself, he always told Skeeme to take me, and desired him to give me anything I wanted in the shape of supper afterwards, but to take care that I fell into no bad company. No man could be more trustworthy than Skeeme. He always took charge of me with the greatest readiness, although I have no doubt his doing so often interfered with his own evening amusements. Nothing could be more kind, and yet at the same time more respectful, than he was. His dress and manner gave him more the appearance of a semi-clerical private tutor than a valet, and had it not been for a triok he had of dropping his H's, and an incurable habit he had of adding an R to the end of every word ending with a vowel, he might very well have passed for a somewhat dandified curate—that is, according to the coats, neckties, and waistcoats, which were worn by gentlemen who had "taken orders" in the days when ritualism was as yet unheard of in the land. I have no doubt that Skeeme made altogether a very nice thing out of my cousin: who, though not an extravagant man, left everything to his valet, and merely looked at the total of the latter's account-book when he presented it every month: giving him a cheque for the amount without asking a question. In fact, it always appeared to me that Skeeme appeared to have more ready money than his master. Every week or so my cousin would ask me, laughingly, whether I wanted pocket-money? And, as like all school-

boys, I invariably did want pocket-money, he always said, "Tell Skeeme to give you a couple of sovereigns;" which request the valet at once complied with, not even asking my cousin whether it was correct or not.

I remember on one occasion my cousin—"The Colonel," as Skeeme used to call him, though he was but a captain in the Guards, and a lieutenant-colonel in the army—making up his mind very late the night before the race that he would go down to see the Derby run next day, and would take me with him. A brother-officer of his was going to drive a party down by the road—in those days, rail to Epsom was unheard of—and was to call for my cousin and myself about eight A.M. Suddenly my cousin remembered that he had only a couple of sovereigns in his purse, and that it was long after banking hours, and that he would start next morning before the banks were open. "Let me see what Skeeme can do for me," said he, ringing the bell, which was at once answered by that most respectfully grave valet. "Skeeme," said my relation, "can you let me have any money?" I want to start before the banks will be open to-morrow; I will give you a cheque which you can get cashed any time after nine." "How much do you require, colonel?" was the reply. "Well," said my cousin, "if you could get me twenty or thirty pounds it would be enough; if I want more, I can borrow it from some friend on the course." "Better make it fifty, colonel," said Skeeme; "Epsom is not a place to go to, without plenty of money in your pocket. I'll get you what you want at once." In five minutes he returned and handed over ten five-pound notes to his master, who sat down at once to write him a cheque. "No occasion for that, colonel," said the valet; "I'll put it down in the book, and you can give me a cheque for the whole at the end of the month." What Skeeme called "the book," was a thin account-book, in which every item of my cousin's expenditure was put down. And what with certain quiet dinner-parties, with whist to follow, which "the colonel" was rather celebrated for among his acquaintance, to say nothing of his wine-merchant's account, Fornum and Mason's ditto, stable expenses, travelling expenses—for my cousin went about a great deal to various race meetings, and always took Skeeme with him, the latter paying everything; as his master was a man who hated trouble of all kinds—the various outlays were pretty heavy. Skeeme himself was a married man, but "without incumbrance," as the advertisements say. His wife—quite as respectable looking, and almost as grave as her husband—lived in my cousin's house as his cook and housekeeper, so that between them they had to pay no rent. Their united wages—witheverything found—were (as Skeeme used to say with the air of a Chancellor of the Exchequer when stating the accounts of the kingdom) "a consolidated hundred pounds per annum." Besides this, there were, of course, certain perquisites.

The colonel, though by no means a "dressy

man," or a loud "dresser," used to get tired of his clothes, and with the exception of his uniform and hunting-coats, very seldom wore any garment very long. What he got tired of was, as a matter of course, handed over to Skeeme. Then the butcher, baker, grocer, greengrocer, coal-merchant, and other tradesmen, of course supplied what was ordered by Mrs. Skeeme in her capacity of housekeeper, and the accounts were made up, submitted to, and paid by, Mr. Skeeme, in his capacity of steward or butler. The average total of "the book," at the end of the month, was from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty pounds. Was it to be wondered at if the family of Skeeme managed to make something exceedingly comfortable for themselves, and that after some six or eight years' service with the same master they were enabled to invest money in Consols, and even complained that the interest on government securities was so very small?

About a couple of years after I first knew Skeeme—I think it was in 1841—my cousin, who was also my guardian, and, indeed, the only near relative I had in the world, procured me a commission in the army. Having barely money enough of my own to purchase my various steps even in a line regiment, it was deemed advisable that I should go out to India, and I accordingly asked for and obtained an ensigncy in a regiment stationed in that country. I was absent from England some four years, during which time I often heard from my cousin, and once or twice from his valet. The last letter I received from Skeeme, while I was still out in the East, informed me that "the colonel" was going to leave the Guards—to sell out of the service—and get married. "Of course," continued the writer, "I shall remain with my master until his marriage takes place, but both I and my wife will then leave him, for it would not suit us to keep in service with a married gentleman." A letter from my cousin confirmed what his servant had written, and at the same time expressed a hope that I would come home in time to be present at the wedding, which was to take place in about eight or nine months. Being able to obtain leave of absence, I very soon started for Europe, and in thirty-five days or so after leaving Bombay found myself in a Hansom cab bowling away from the London-bridge station to South Audley-street, where the colonel gave me a very kind reception. Skeeme was as grave and as respectable looking as ever. My cousin was dining out with the family of his intended, on the night of my arrival, and so I took my dinner alone, conversing all the time with Skeeme, who waited upon me, and upon whom I looked in the light of an old friend. He did not appear at all annoyed at the prospective change in my cousin's state of life, but said that in any case he and his wife would very soon have retired from service, as they had been able to "save a little money," and it was time they should enjoy themselves. I asked Skeeme if he

intended to take a public-house or an inn? He replied that neither was at all in his line, and that he thought he would take an office in the City, and commence doing a little for himself in the way of speculating. At this I laughed, and said he must have put by something exceedingly comfortable. He replied in his own grave way that he *had* a few pounds more than was actually necessary for a couple without incumbrances, and, upon my cross-questioning him, acknowledged that he had a couple of houses "down Brompton way," which he had bought for a mere trifle at the sale of a bankrupt builder, and which now, between them, gave him an income of eighty pounds a year net. In addition to this property, he had two thousand five hundred in Consols, and about as much more, which he kept floating in good bills at from sixty to eighty per cent—money lent through a discounter to gentlemen of property, Guardsmen, and others, who were hard up.

"Lord bless you, sir," said Skeeme, who became excited with the subject, and was warmed up with a couple of glasses of wine I had invited him to drink: "Lord bless you, sir, if you knew how often I have waited in this very room upon gentlemen dining with my master, whose bills for one hundred, two hundred, three hundred, pounds I had in my pocket, you would be surprised. Why, no longer ago than last Friday, there was Sir James Cofden, of the Blues, sitting at this table, and as the dinner was finished he pulled out his note-case, and handed ten ten-pound notes to my master, saying, 'There you are, old fellow; there's the hundred I lost to you at Ascot. I only got my rents this morning from Yorkshire, or you should have had it before.' I knew well enough what 'rents' had been paid to Sir James the night before. I knew that he had done a bill with old Malden, of Clifford-street, the bill being drawn by himself, and accepted by Foster Crib, of the Ninth Hussars, and that for a three months' 'I promise to pay a hundred and fifty pounds,' on stamped paper, he had received Malden's cheque for one hundred and twenty pounds. I knew all this, and, indeed, I had his bill in my pocket at that very moment, for Malden had done the little business with *my* money, and I was the party to whom reference had to be made 'in the City' before the transaction was completed. You seem surprised, sir," he continued, "but I assure you I have had in my time the acceptances of half the Household Brigade in my hands, to say nothing of the brigade of Foot Guards, and nearly all the crack cavalry regiments. But the game is too risky. I have now got very little money afloat in bills, and even that little I intend to call in as soon as I possibly can."

At my cousin's marriage, I saw and spoke to Skeeme, who that day gave up his situation with "the colonel," and went down, as he told me, for a week's holiday to Brighton. The time

I write of was the time of the railway mania, and those who remember the advertising columns of the Times in those days will not easily forget the prodigious schemes which, day by day, were put forth to the world, in the shape of new railway plans. I recollect one day in particular. It was about the middle of July, 1845. That morning there were no fewer than twenty-seven new railways—or rather say plans of impossible railway schemes—offered to the public; and a stockbroker told me that in forty-eight hours every one of the twenty-seven schemes was at a considerable premium. I was seized with the mania of speculation. It was easy to ask for, but by no means so easy to obtain, shares in those days, unless you knew some of the directors. I wrote to four or five of the newest lines, but obtained no favourable reply, and was one day lamenting my misfortune to Coxon of the Seventy-first, at the "Rag," knowing how well that youthful captain had increased his modest wealth by having had shares in new lines allotted to him, and invariably selling them the moment they commanded a premium, which was generally the very next day.

"Look here, old fellow," said my friend, as we sat at dinner one very hot evening; "for the last two months I have, on an average, had a hundred shares a day allotted me in one or more railway lines, and the average premium I have sold them at, has been a pound a share. That makes, at a hundred pounds a day for sixty days, six thousand pounds; if you come round to my lodgings to-morrow, I'll show you my banker's book with five thousand six hundred pounds to my credit, which will just make the balance right when I deduct the money I have spent."

This made my mouth water, for my ill luck had been as unceasing as my friend's good fortune had been great. I therefore asked him how it was he had succeeded in having so many shares allotted him, and whether he would, for old acquaintance' sake, "put me up to a good thing or two."

"I'll tell you what," said Coxon: "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll take you into the City to-morrow and introduce you to a capital fellow, who is a director upon three or four of the best new lines that have come out, and who is to be a director of the 'Edinburgh and Cornwall Direct Line,' which will be out in the course of a few days. You ask him to allot you five or six hundred shares in that line, and you will sell them next day for at least a couple of pounds premium."

"Where did you make the acquaintance of so estimable a character?" I asked.

"At the office of Malden, the bill-discounter, in Clifford-street," said Coxon. "I went there one day about a bit of stamped paper on which I had written my name, and which was considerably over-due. Malden either could, or would, do nothing to help me, but introduced me to 'the party from the City,' with whose money the bill had been 'done.'

With this 'party' I got into conversation, and he very kindly renewed the document. I kept my word, in paying him when the fresh bill became due, and since that we have been very good friends indeed. He has more than once melted some valuable stamp paper for me, and when the railway mania broke out, I got him to allot me shares in some of the very best things going; for he is very much sought after as a director."

"Pray, may I ask the name of your friend?" said I, little thinking what Coxon's reply would be.

"His name?" said the captain; "his name is Skeeme."

"What!" said I, "John Skeeme?"

"Yes," said Coxon; "do you know him?"

"Of course I do," was my reply; "he was valet to a cousin of mine in the Guards."

"Impossible, my dear fellow," said Coxon. "I have known Mr. Skeeme for three years and more, and have often met him at his office in the City, where he keeps two clerks, and has long done a considerable stroke of business in money-lending."

To make a long story short, I went next day with Coxon into the City, and in a court somewhere behind the Mansion House, up two pair of stairs, we came to a door, upon which was painted the name "Mr. Skeeme." Inside were two clerks, one of whom seemed to be copying very long and complicated accounts which the other read off from a ledger. On asking for Mr. Skeeme, we were told that he was within, but very busy indeed with two gentlemen, and would not be disengaged for an hour. We therefore went away; and, taking me to a stationer's, Coxon wrote a note of introduction for me, as he was pressed for time, and could not remain any longer at the east-end of town.

Armed with this document, I returned to Mr. Skeeme's office, and was at once shown into his sanctuary. As I had imagined, this great railway director was no other than my old friend.

I neither presented Coxon's letter of introduction, nor mentioned his name, for I did not want Skeeme to feel humiliated by the other's knowing he had been a valet. I pretended that I had seen his name down as a director of the new "Edinburgh and Cornwall Direct" line, and begged he would do his best to allot me a couple of hundred shares. This he not only agreed to do, but even offered, and I accepted, to put my name down for a hundred extra shares: all of which I sold as soon as the prospectus was published in the Times, at a premium, of two pounds ten shillings each.

As soon as our conversation about shares was over, Skeeme entered into a long explanation with me.

"I have had this office," said he, "for about four years, although, when valet to the colonel, I could not visit it every day. For a long time I did nothing except in the private bill discounting line; but when all the new railways began to be projected, I was asked by people, who only knew me in my business capacity, to

become a director. After a great deal of hesitation I agreed to join the Chatham and Portsmouth board. Being a director, I allotted myself a thousand shares, and sold them next day at two pounds premium. This was a very short time before my old master married. I knew I should have to leave him, and thought I might as well turn railway director as take to any other trade. I am, or I have been, on the direction of seven lines, and by these I have netted at least fourteen thousand pounds. But I think these fine days won't last very long, and so I intend this line to be my last venture. If it succeeds, as we believe it will, and I can get three pounds premium on the three thousand shares I have taken, I shall retire from the business, for I feel pretty certain that a crash will soon come."

After this, so long as my leave of absence lasted, hardly a couple of days passed without my going to Skeeme's office. The rage for railway shares lasted a little longer than he had prophesied, and I managed to make some four or five thousand pounds. My friend Skeeme would have done better if he had kept to his first resolution. After selling all his shares, he was induced, by love of gain, to recommence speculation again, and when the crash came it found him still mixed up as director with four or five schemes, any one of which was of itself enough to eat up all his profits, and more. When the evil day arrived, he was sued by two or three railway shareholders, and judgments were given against him. Little by little he had to part with nearly every pound he had; for being known to be a rich man, every shareholder in every company he had been connected with at any time, began to issue writs against him. He tried to get away to France, but some of his creditors were too sharp for him, and he was arrested upon a "capias" at Dover. He went to jail, and offered to compound with his creditors. His offer was refused, and so he filed his petition and went through the Bankruptcy Court, coming out at the end of three months without a shilling. My cousin, who liked poor Skeeme very much, settled one hundred pounds a year upon him, and the ex-valet retired to the country, where he and his wife lived on the annuity which their old master "the colonel" allowed him.

Some fifteen years passed by, and I saw or heard nothing of Skeeme. I had been out to India again; had come back once more; had then gone through a period of home service; after which I had embarked for Canada, and had come back to England after selling out. Happening to go into the City one morning, I ran against a gentleman who was coming out of a bank as I was going in. He turned to apologise, and before I could call to mind where I had seen his face before, he recognised me, called me by my name, and shook hands with me very heartily. The man was no other than my old acquaintance Skeeme. Not being able to talk in the noisy streets of the City, we went together to a luncheon-bar, and there he told me that he had remained some

four or five years in the country, but that the old rage for speculation had come upon him so strongly that he had returned again to London; some friends had lent him a few hundred pounds on which to recommence, and though his life had at first been but a hand to mouth existence, he had been happier in London than in the country. Latterly, he had been doing very well indeed, and now that the mania for joint-stock companies of all kinds had set in, he hoped to make a good thing of it. "I leave the directorships alone, now-a-days," he said; "my business is to 'promote' companies. Here, now, is a capital thing, safe to come out at from one and a half to two premium," saying which he unfolded the prospectus of "The Deep Sea Copper Mining Company (Limited), capital £500,000, in 100,000 shares of £5 each, of which £1 will be paid on application, £1 on allotment, and £1 not sooner than twelve months after allotment." "If you can get me two good directors for this company," said Skeeme, "I am quite willing to allow you three hundred pounds of my share of the promotion money."

It was evident that Skeeme, having money of his own to speculate with, had taken to the profession of a promoter with all the forethought and carefulness which his previous misfortunes had taught him. I did not much admire his "Deep Sea Copper Mining Company," although, to do him justice, he brought it out at three pounds premium, and a hundred shares which he had managed to get allotted to me I sold at that very respectable figure.

But a better and far more profitable project was put into shape by my old friend. Having felt severely the want of capital himself, he often considered whether a sort of unlimited credit upon bills, or other documents, could not be set on foot; and one day, by inspiration as it were, he solved the problem. His idea—not altogether new, for it had been worked to some extent on the Continent—was to establish a joint-stock company ("limited," of course), with, nominally, an immense capital, very little of which was to be paid up, but the operations of the concern were to be carried on altogether upon acceptances, or bills of the company. If it succeeded, the profits upon the paid-up capital would be immense. For instance, let us suppose that a certain railway wanted money—say a trifle of five hundred thousand pounds or so. To borrow such a sum at any bank would be an impossibility. In the first place, the line was only half constructed, and never could be finished unless the loan were obtained. Security, beyond the works already completed, it had none to offer; all its capital, to say nothing of the money obtained from debentures, having long ago been used up. Well; the railway directors would get the contractor to draw upon them for six hundred thousand or seven hundred thousand pounds in bills, which the said board would accept. These the contractor would deposit with the new-fashioned finance company, and upon that security—if such a name can be given it—he would obtain the

money he required to finish the works. This would not be given in cash. The contractor would have to draw another set of bills upon the board of directors of the finance company, these would be accepted, and then taken elsewhere to discount. For this transaction the finance company would, perhaps, charge as high as ten per cent—for merely giving its acceptance to the railway contractor—and ten per cent upon mere paper very soon makes the interest of the capital something exceedingly respectable. My friend Skeeme was quite full of this new plan. "Others charge interest for money," said he, "but we shall charge interest upon paper; being all the time as secure as if we had the guarantee of the Bank of England."

For a long time the plan seemed to work wonderfully well. I should have mentioned that Skeeme's company, "The General and Universal Confidence Company, Limited," took immensely in the City. The idea was thought so good, and there was something so new in it, that a regular rush was made to obtain shares. On the very first day that the concern was advertised, it rose to four premium. I managed to realise a nice little sum out of the fifty shares I obtained through the influence of Skeeme. In a very short time it was known in the City who had first planned the Confidence Company; and when middle-aged or old men knew that it was the Mr. Skeeme well known in old days, they were proud of the genius of their old friend. The promotion money which Skeeme obtained for bringing out the "General and Universal Confidence Company, Limited," was a very handsome sum: no less than ten thousand pounds. The reputation he achieved in the financial world was still greater. On every side, offers were made him to become a director of this, vice-chairman of that, or chairman of the other, company. For a long time he resisted the temptation, but it proved too strong at last. One morning, in the money article of the Times, I read that Mr. John Skeeme, the well-known authority on financial matters, had consented to become chairman of the "Universal Discount Company" (a new affair), and that, in consequence of this announcement, the shares of the company had risen from two pounds fifteen shillings, to four pounds two shillings and sixpence premium, in a single afternoon.

THE UNLUCKY CAPTAIN.

I STOOD on Rousseau's Bridge at Geneva, at mid-day, waiting for the steam-boat to start for Montreux. How long I waited, I knew not, nor, indeed, did I care. Who can tire of the rushing past of that glorious river? There it glides from the lake, more transparent than at Ville Neuve, and with a far more vivid colour. Here it flings itself, with a joyful bound, under the bridges, and over the shining sands! A pure life it has had (like other lives I know), never dimmed by contact with base things, but

purifying all in its vicinity, and leaving a bright line of light behind. Always so brilliant and so clear, reflecting sun and Alps and city in even brighter colours than their own. As I gazed into the blue and shining water, a swan, "milk white," floated majestically by. I raised my eyes, and there, high up among the clouds, shone out Mont Blanc, that monarch of mountains, with "his diadem of snow;" and nearer still, rose many mountains, forest-clad, or with soft velvet turf, and flowers and aromatic plants (and my soul was singing a hymn of Paradise), when a shriek, prolonged, repeated, recalled me to myself. It was the last cry of the departing steam-boat. I had seen my luggage placed on board some hours before, and I had only time to run across the bridge and spring on deck, before the paddles were in motion, and the hawser cast off.

A slight shudder came over me, when I recognised, in the person of the captain, an old friend, familiarly known as the "Unglücklicher" (Unlucky One). I turned to the friendly shore, in the vague hope of deferring my voyage; but the little wooden bridge was up, and there were many yards between me and the land. There was nothing left for it but for I and the Unlucky Captain to swim or sink—as I felt in my inmost heart the chances were we should—together. I took a sorrowful farewell of Geneva, and threw an anxious glance across the lake. It was as smooth as glass; but what had waves and winds to do with fatality such as the Unlucky Captain's?

It was some comfort to find we were towing two large empty boats. Taking up a position as near to them as possible, I drew from my pocket a letter containing recent news of the "Unglücklicher."

How many good ships and new, had sunk beneath our captain's military-looking legs, it is impossible for me to state correctly. As a mere tourist, I *knew* of three. The extraordinary habit he had of wrecking them in that glassy sea, was only exceeded by his wonderful gift of fishing them up again. One went down like the Royal George, in port, on the loveliest and calmest day. In three weeks she was up again—in a deplorable state, certainly, as regards cabin furniture, and full of fish—but still *up*, and afloat! She had come, in the usual course of things, to pass the night in harbour, when "a turn too much," as the captain expressed it, ran her over the small portion of an old pier, so close to the shore that it had never been considered necessary to remove it. Moreover, every stick and stone of that old arrangement could be distinctly seen from boat or shore. These little "misfortunes" had always happened within a few yards of land, and had never been attended with any loss or even danger of life; but "the company" were in despair. The losses to them were incalculable. The wages of fishers up, the repairs, or actual destruction of ships, were to them frightful. But the most curious feature in the whole proceeding was the way in which the

half-ruined company protected and clung to its Unlucky Captain! No sooner was a ship "down" and up again, than "presto" (and pending the necessary repairs), behold our dear old friend in command of the best boat on the lake. His little gentlemanly feet shod in the most irreproachable boots, his white pantaloons girded round the waist with a crimson silk sash, a loose blue jacket with gold buttons, showing the device of an anchor, emblem of hope, or, "better-luck-next-time" buttons, as Jack used to call them; a little blue cap, showing on the front a still larger anchor. The whole man, so to speak, was steeped in hope; and bravely his goddess carried him through. His face shone with good humour and fun, with a dash of the "vaurien" rakishness best described by an English lady in the habit of making the voyage, "He has such a dear, good-for-nothing look!" But listen to a recent act of this heroic "good-for-nothing." In one of his successful voyages across the lake they encountered one of the sudden and terrific storms that sweep down the reefs in the Alps. The steamer was safe enough, but they were not far from a small pleasure-boat, wherein were two boys battling in vain with the large wing-like sail, to take it in. In a moment the boat cap-sized. One of the boys clung fast while it floated bottom upward, but the other was already in the current of the Rhône stream that was carrying him slowly, but surely, far from help. Our dear old captain plunged into the lake, and, swimming hard, overtook him before he sank, and held him safely until the steamer's boat rowed to the rescue, and took them in. And they picked up the other little fellow as they passed. Who would not be such an Unlucky Captain?

But to return to the actual state of things, and to this particular voyage from Geneva to Montreux.

"I suppose you have heard of our friend's last exploit?" said an old friend of mine, an inhabitant of Geneva, pointing over his shoulder to where the captain was standing, surrounded by a little knot of admiring passengers.

"No; do tell!" said an American lady.

"Well," continued my friend, "he is at the top of the tree now. He wrecked that lovely little Seagull, the admiration even of naval men, six weeks ago, and now they've given him this, the best boat on the lake."

"His promotion was gained in this wise: About six weeks since, the Unlucky Captain was on the deck of the Seagull, talking, in his genial way, with an English tourist and myself. You all know the Russian Princess's house, about ten miles further up? The land stretches out in a point there, well enough defined; but everybody hereabouts knows it must have a wide berth before making for the bay beyond. The captain pointed out the princess's house to the Englishman, and signed to the man at the wheel to edge in a little, until, in fact, we were not twenty yards from land.

"Suddenly, crash! Crack went the ship!

The people sitting upon camp-stools, rolled over and about in all directions. The ship was immovable, happily for us and our carpet-bags; for as long as the sharp rock she had struck upon remained in the hole it had made, the water entered but slowly. Still, we were as if you were balancing a toy-boat on the tip of your finger.

"I looked at the captain. He was stamping his feet and tearing his hair, but only for a moment. He soon recovered from his surprise, and giving a tighter twitch to his scarlet sash, addressed himself with the greatest intelligence to doing the best that could be done under the circumstances. Some ladies came screaming up from the saloon, naturally alarmed by the breaking up of the flooring, and the fountain of water springing up among the flowers on the carpet; but they were greatly relieved to find how near they were to a hospitable shore, being within that particular distance usually described by 'as far as I can kick my hat.'

"The captain ordered round the boats (they had been 'out' in readiness all day), and the debarkation of the 'women and children' commenced instant. In about ten trips, and in as many minutes, the passengers and crew were all safe on shore—all but the captain, who stuck gallantly to the ship. He sent everything movable out of her, had the carpets torn up, and indeed saved *everything*—except the ship and the engines. There was great excitement among the unfortunate shareholders at Geneva. They sent off immediately three of 'the company' to inquire into the circumstances of the accident, to report upon the same, and to administer a reprimand to the captain, if deserved. While they were holding a solemn and anxious meeting at Geneva, a letter was received from the three delegates, full of enthusiastic admiration of the 'resource and intelligence' of the captain under extraordinary difficulties.

"They had evidently gone over to the enemy, and succumbed under the influence of his genial countenance. 'His efforts,' they said, 'were superhuman, his energy untiring. Night and day he worked and directed with every hope of success.' In a postscript was added, that the 'shareholders might rest assured that every care would be taken of the captain, and that he was supplied with everything that he could possibly require to soften, as far as might be, the great misfortune that had befallen him. A pair of *goloshes* had just been returned to them with the captain's best thanks, but the water being two feet above the deck, they were unnecessary.' 'The company' groaned at the forlorn picture.

"For a week the captain and his staff worked without intermission. An enormous raft of wood encircled the scene of his disasters and his labours. At last the little Seagull rose several feet out of water, and that night the captain went on shore to take some rest. Poor man, he slept the sleep of the wet and weary. He dreamed that he was swimming

for his life with his head under water (the normal state of his affairs in the flesh); in his efforts to breathe he awoke, and found himself upon the floor. He was off at daylight to the scene of his triumphs, and, in the joy of his heart, sent to invite the delegates to breakfast on board.

"In about three weeks, passed in the alternations of hope and fear, the steam-boat fairly floated. To be sure, she was full of water, her back and ribs were broken, she had scarcely a whole bone in her body; but still she floated, and, supported by a little forest of fir-trees without, and a cargo of timber within, 'the company' cherished every hope of being able on a calm day to tow her back to Geneva. Some rough weather postponed the attempt for some days—days passed by our friend in triumphant glee. He was fêted by the shareholders, and all along the shores of Lake Lemman nothing was heard of but the genius for hydraulics developed in the Unlucky Captain. He received very graciously a deputation of ship-builders, was appointed to this splendid boat with increased pay, and was presented with a silken banner, federal-embroidered by ladies: the very banner now waving above us.

"At the end of a week the weather moderated. The steam-tug crept up the lake, and made fast to our crippled friend, 'and all went merry as a marriage bell' (one naturally quotes Byron here). The voyage might take seven or eight hours. The dear old captain was in the highest spirits; he could not remain in the dirty little tug, but rowed merrily round and about his old disabled love, as if to keep up her spirits with his own; when, swoop, came a blast of wind down that terrific gorge we are just passing! In five minutes the whole lake was up. The captain sought refuge in the tug; and the poor little Seagull, after twirling and twisting, the sport of winds and waves, shook herself free from the protecting fir-trees, and settled down at the bottom of the lake. The tug cast off the firewood at the captain's stern command. 'The company,' awaiting in a body the arrival of the wreck, were touched by the captain's agitation and distress. He really was knocked up in body and mind, so they took him home, and coaxed him into health and appetite (the last thing that fails a true son of Tell), and, presenting him with a testimonial, sent him aloft again."

"The question is whether *we* shall float," growled a nervous passenger; "why does that ass of a tourist occupy the captain's attention?"

"Oh," said my friend, "don't be alarmed about that. I forgot to tell you that 'the company' held a meeting—closed doors, and all that—and when they reappointed the captain, they also appointed a lieutenant: that fellow standing on the paddle-box. *He* is to direct the steersman, and in fact has the entire charge of the navigation. The captain being requested, 'as a favour to the company,' to take his stand at the gangway, at the exit and entrance of pas-

sengers, to receive tickets, in consequence of discrepancies in the issue of them and the reception of money. This relieves him of all responsibility regarding the ship, and is, in fact, a compliment, as showing the confidence reposed in him by the company. I am myself a shareholder," continued my friend; "I have sustained considerable losses; but I also participate in the enthusiasm for our captain. I declare to you he is the best fellow——"

Hallo! What's that? There was a crack and a scrape from end to end of the ship. We breathed again, for we were making way; but we had evidently passed over some hard and dangerous substance.

"There!" again groaned the nervous passenger.

"Ease her! Stop her! Back her!" shouted the captain, and the man at the helm (who hated the lieutenant) obeyed. The captain, with a wild gleam in his eyes, pointed (for he could not speak) to a dark something in the lake; and there, reposing under the shining water, we distinctly saw the beautiful little Seagull, or all that remained of her.

We had struck upon her topmast, and had scraped over it from end to end without injury; but, alas! while hovering so lovingly over and around the remains of his lost pet, the captain once more took "a turn too much," and—not far off from the scene of the last catastrophe—we took, struck heavily, and, I felt assured, hopelessly, on the sand.

There was no danger for the moment, as the bottom was soft, and not a breath of air was stirring the sleeping lake. The dear old captain assured us that we should float again in half an hour; but my time in Switzerland was short, and bidding a hasty adieu "To the ship and her crew," I, with my bag and the nervous gentleman, rowed to shore: thence to get on, as we best might, to Montreux.

Three days afterwards, in the train, I passed near the scene of our disaster, and there, with shocked surprise, I beheld the ship still hard and fast, surrounded by a fleet of boats and the inevitable fir-trees, the little tug creeping up from Geneva, and the dear old captain, in his scarlet sash, radiant and gleaming amongst the crowd, lending a hand everywhere, directing, working, and sending off reassuring telegrams every half-hour. I was obliged to continue my journey direct to England; but I felt a pleasurable conviction that this accident—being only, as it were, in connexion with the last, and developing, in an equal degree, the resources of the commander—would be worth to him at least a silver cup and a banner, cantonal.

As the train rushed by, I strained my eyes to catch a last glimpse of the dear old fellow and his staff. There they were, the ship, the water, and the Alps, all glowing in the sunset! As I smiled at his uncertain voyages, may I be forgiven for confessing that these lines of Wordsworth's visited my brain:

Where lies the land to which that ship must go?
What haven is her mark?

And almost, as it was, when ships were rare,
A doubt, and something dark,
Some reverential fear
Is with thee, at "this" farewell, joyous bark.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

THE FIRST USE OF GAS IN LONDON.

THOSE sanguine and patient enthusiasts, the alchemists, were not by any means the jugglers and charlatans they are commonly supposed to have been. Disdainers of dogmas, earnest searchers for new truths, strenuous navigators in the advanced trenches of scientific discovery, putting nature to the rack, forcing her by steel and fire to disclose her secrets after the dumbness of long ages—those laborious men broke up the old ground of Aristotle, and sank deep the piles on which modern medicine and modern chemistry have reared their vast but still uncompleted palaces. They first struck the lodes, which have since widened into richer veins. To reproach them because they sought for impossibilities is like striking the infant because it cannot at once speak. We must not forget that modern science has shown that there were germs of truth even in their wildest dreams. The great Liebig can manufacture gems by chemical combinations; he has publicly expressed the opinion that we shall, before long, learn how to make gold; and we must remember that if a common basis of all minerals was once found, gold-making would be the smallest of the benefits mankind would derive from the vast discovery.

The early alchemists obtained a great knowledge of the properties of natural objects by their ceaseless and prolonged experiments. It was they who discovered alcohol: that mingled curse and blessing. They first taught us the use of mineral medicines. Basil Valentine devoted half his adventurous life to the study of the medicinal properties of antimony. Paracelsus brought from the East opium, the pain-killer, in all its compounds. It was an alchemist who discovered phosphorus. Lastly, it was Van Helmont, an alchemist, who first analysed atmospheric air, and discovered that it is composed of gases. In the Spa waters of Germany he first observed carbonic acid gas, and learned to distinguish it as a distinct elastic aeriform substance to be elicited only by chemical decomposition, and considering it as more of an essence than common atmospheric air, he gave it the German name of *Gheist* (ghost or spirit), from whence comes our English word gas. This great discovery dates about 1624.

The Baconic theory, promulgated and acted upon centuries before Bacon translated it into his own beautiful and sound English, led rapidly to the development of experimental philosophy. Wise men began, after wasted centuries, to regard finality dogmas as only fit for men whose minds had ceased to grow, or men who benefited by the dogmas they inculcated. Nothing now was to be believed that could not be verified by experiment; no

theories were to be admitted that did not bear the test of experiment and varied observation. A wise humility took the place of the old mischievous and aggressive dogmatism. Even Newton, when he was vouchsafed glimpses of the divine secrets, confessed that his theory of gravitation was only the *locum tenens* for some greater and more central truth yet to be discovered. In every nation the new philosophy was coloured by the national character: in France it became sceptical and mathematical; in Germany, more abstract and generalising; in England, more practical and energetic. As the new science had always special topics on which it was engaged, it often happened that, with so many thousand observers, many of its most useful discoveries were made simultaneously in several countries. A long range of semi-discoveries in England, France, and Germany led slowly up to the great results of Watt and his steam-engine. In older times such secrets were sought for by fewer miners. The field of knowledge was indeed but a small spot then.

As it was with steam, so it was with gas. Van Helmont's discoveries lay apparently dormant for many years, but they were not forgotten. Scientific curiosity was approaching them by analysis, and already the first truths had grown and put forth branches in that vast collection of observations, at first so often timid and puerile, the *Philosophical Transactions*. In 1667, a Mr. Shirley, a gentleman living at Wigan, wrote to describe a series of experiments he had commenced in 1659 on the waters of a burning spring on the Warrington road. This water burnt like oil when a candle was applied to its surface, being impregnated with carburetted hydrogen gas from the coal seams that underlaid it. Shirley, a thoughtful man, saw at once that it was not the water that burned, but only some emanation from the coal earth. This he proved by draining the place and then setting fire to the dry earth, which threw up a cone of flame as wide as a hat and a foot and a half high. This flame he proved he could extinguish by water.

Boyle carried further and gave more popularity to Van Helmont's experiments. He proved that fixed air and inflammable air are elastic fluids capable of being exhibited unmixed with common air. In 1726, Dr. Hefler Hales distilled coal, obtained gas, and observed and noted down its elasticity. In 1733, the *Philosophical Transactions* record some valuable and suggestive experiments made in a coal-pit belonging to Sir James Lowther, near Whitehaven, in Cumberland. The pit was near the full sea-mark, and intended to drain a neighbouring colliery. When the pit was sunk forty-two fathoms from the surface, the workers came on a six-inch bed of black stone, full of clefts, under which lay a seam of coal. When this black stone was pierced, a quantity of damp corrupted air came bubbling through the water with a hissing noise. On a startled workman putting a candle towards it, the water caught fire and rose in a wave of flame two yards high.

This frightened the men so much that they beat out the fire with their hats, then ran to the rope and escaped up the pit. The steward of the works then came down, and again lit the gas, which soon rose and covered the bottom of the pit a yard deep. Extinguishing the flame, the men, who had returned, opened a larger aperture in the bed of black stone. This time the gas flared three yards high, and almost stifled them. Unable to flap it out with their hats, they got down a spout from a cistern and so extinguished it. After this, no candles were allowed in the pit till the coal was reached, and a tube carried into the open air to carry off the gas. This stream of gas continued unabated in strength or quantity for several years. Many savans came to collect this strange form of air in bladders. Some of it was taken to the Royal Society, and there burnt, to the delight of the wiggish philosophers. A small pipe was first put into the bladder, and the gas pressed through that into the flame of a candle. Still no glimmering of its vast capabilities of usefulness broke upon the savans. They were not quite ripe for that discovery yet. It was observed that sparks would not light it; so the workmen used flint and steel in the dark passages, and toiled on by the miserable and momentary twinklings. After the tube was fixed, the pit was no more troubled with the mysterious "damp and corrupted air," which would burn after being kept a whole month in a bladder. In 1726, "the ingenious" Dr. Stephen Hales first obtained gas by distilling coal; but his experiments were rather with a view to observe the elasticity than the inflammability of the new vapour.

In 1739, the Rev. Dr. John Clayton, Dean of Kildare and brother of one of Boyle's correspondents, came a step or two nearer to the bright secret. He went to see a ditch near Wigan (probably Mr. Shirley's spring), because he heard that the water there would burn like brandy, would boil eggs, and thirty years before had actually boiled a piece of beef; but was now much less fierce, especially after rain.

Some experiments, not unlike Shirley's, soon convinced Mr. Clayton that it was not water that really fed the fire. Digging down half a yard, he found a shaly coal, which yielded an inflammable vapour. To prove the vapour came from the coal, Mr. Clayton distilled some coal. From this he obtained, first, a black oil (tar), and, lastly, a spirit so intractable as to force the luting of his vessels, break the glasses, and eventually catch fire when a candle came near it. He repeated the experiments with a bladder; but they attracted but little notice. They harmonised with no fashionable and popular theory of the day, and were therefore disregarded; but still the secret was unravelling. Van Helmont had decomposed air. Shirley had observed that certain air rising from the earth would burn; the Whitehaven men had shown that inflammable air could be kept in bladders; and now the learned Dean proved that it could be obtained by distillation from coal.

In 1767, Dr. Watson (afterwards Bishop of Llandaff) ascertained that gas retained its inflammability and elasticity whatever quantity of water it had passed through. Van Helmont lived in the reign of Charles the First. It was not till 1792 (George the Third) that the new discovery was turned to the benefit of mankind and the promotion of civilisation. Hitherto it had been a mere firework to amuse philosophical societies and puzzle coal-miners. In 1792, the new spirit set to work, and began his long task in earnest. Cornwall has always been famous for the ingenious and practical minds that sprang from its soil. It was in Cornwall that that extraordinary man, Trevethick, first drove a steam-carriage along a public road. It was in Cornwall that gas was first used for lighting houses. In 1792, Mr. Murdoch, a metal-founder at Redruth, turned the inflammable air to account, to save oil and candles. He distilled gas from various substances, and lighted his own house, offices, and street. He used to carry bladders of it to use at night in his little steam-carriage, and was very near being suspected of witchcraft. In 1795, he proposed to Mr. James Watt to take out a patent for gas as a substitute for oil. In 1797, Watt lit up with gas his new foundry at Old Cummoek, in Ayrshire; and in 1798 he renewed his experiment on a more ambitious scale at the Soho Foundry, near Birmingham. He also contrived the best modes of preventing the smell or the smoke of gas being offensive.

The Peace of Amiens, and the subsequent rejoicings in 1802, gave the enterprising discoverer opportunities of printing his thoughts on the minds of Birmingham people. On that occasion he illuminated the whole front of his works with various devices, and the Birmingham mob came in thousands to gaze, to wonder, and admire.

Mr. Murdoch had had many difficulties to overcome. But, as he united scientific knowledge with great practical skill, his perseverance enabled him to finally triumph. The retorts first used by him were similar in form to the common glass retorts employed in chemical experiments; he next made trial of cast-iron cylinders, containing about fifteen pounds of coals, which he placed perpendicularly in a common portable furnace; but in 1802 he had recourse to the horizontal mode of setting them. In 1804 and 1805 he varied his plans, and constructed his retorts with an aperture or door at each end, one of them for introducing the coal, and the other for taking out the coke; but this method he found inconvenient and troublesome. In the works which were constructed in 1805 and 1806, for Messrs. Phillips and Lee, at Manchester, he tried one of a different kind, which was very large, and had the form of a bucket with a cover to it. Into this a loose grate, or iron cage, was introduced, for holding the coal; and by this contrivance the whole of the coke could at once be heaved out of the retort, when the carbonisation was completed. This was so

capacious as to contain fifteen hundred-weight of coal, but afterwards smaller sizes in an elliptical form were tried. These were found to produce a greater quantity of gas, also, of a higher degree of illuminating power. Indefatigable in the pursuit of improvement, he made a great number of experiments in order to learn under what circumstances not only the best gas, but the largest quantity of it, could be obtained.

This remarkable man also used quicklime to purify gas, and even succeeded in removing the smell, though at the expense of the light. He tried burners of almost every possible shape, and at various pressures. He tested the various sorts of coal, and the relative economy of gas as compared with candles. Watt, Boulton, Creighton, and all the leading minds of Birmingham, aided Murdoch in these useful researches.

But various shafts had been struck, and already another passage had led to the same discovery. In 1801, Mr. Watt, going over to Paris, wrote back in alarm to Soho to tell them, for Heaven's sake, if they intended to do anything with Murdoch's light, to do it at once, as a Frenchman, named Le Bon, had obtained gas by distilling wood, had lit up his own house and garden, and now proposed to light the whole city of Paris. In 1803, while the invention still lay almost unknown beyond the Soho foundries, a Mr. Winsor—a German, who had Anglicised his name from Winzer—arrived from Paris, and publicly announced himself as the discoverer and inventor of gas-lighting. He was an ignorant boastful man, but confident, industrious, and persevering. It was supposed he had been one of Le Bon's assistants, and having stolen the Promethean secret, had taken French leave of his patron,

He knew little of chemistry, and was so ignorant of mechanics that he could scarcely conduct the erection of his own apparatus. With a noisy charlatanism that annoyed people of sense, this German asserted the grandeur of his discovery, its immense usefulness, and its vast pecuniary value. The adventurer at once obtained a hold over the mind of a retired coach-maker, named Kenzie, who lived in Green-street, near Hyde Park, and this patron lent this Donsterswivel his premises for gas-works. The extraordinary advantages of the new light could not be concealed or denied, and in May, 1804, Mr. Winsor obtained a patent by the influence of his friends. In 1803 and 1804, he first exhibited his plan of illumination at the Lyceum Theatre, then a great resort for lecturers and painters of panoramas. He showed the manner of making the gas, and conveying it round and up and down a house; he also explained how the form of the flame could be modified by the shape of the burner—that its intense flame would not be extinguished by strong and sudden gusts of wind, and that it would neither produce smoke, nor scatter dangerous sparks. The most sceptical could not deny the existence of the light, or its brilliancy; but the pretensions of the lecturer offended and irritated many

who were advocates of oil. Winsor's calculations of profit were extravagant, his theories ludicrous and impracticable, his exaggerations manifest, his truthfulness not always too palpable. He surrounded himself with low drunken clerks and ignorant smiths and tinkers, who could not, and would not, do their work well. The gas he distilled was impure, and its pungent smell annoyed and deterred his audience. The man whom he employed to lecture used to be often missing, till all the spectators had left the Lyceum in disappointment and disgust. The following will give a specimen of the manner in which Winsor met all objections—many of them stupid and ignorant. It is taken from one of his pamphlets:

Q. Will your plan not hurt our fisheries, oil and tallow trade, &c., nurseries of seamen, &c.?

A. No; they must increase by it, because, from saving so many new products at home, we increase our exportations; we can afford to undersell in every foreign market all we gain at home from worse than nothing, from miserable smoke. We can employ hundreds of more vessels, and thousands of more seamen, for the benefit of our nurseries.

Q. What will become of our tallow-chandlers, our oilmen, our wick and snuffer makers, &c.?

A. They may all work for exportation; that is, become either exporters themselves, or sell to merchants who export in general. Thousands of chests, containing twenty to a hundred dozen of indifferent candles, are annually sent from Russia all the world over. I trust England may command the foreign markets with superior candles at a cheaper rate.

Q. But the lamp-lighters and chimney-sweepers?

A. The former will light *clearer* lamps in a *cleaner* dress, and no longer annoy the street passengers with the smoke and dirt of train oil. As for the poor chimney-sweepers, I hope they will get a more *Christian-like* employment.

Q. Your tubes—will they not be very expensive?

A. They will not be half the expense of water-tubes, nor need they be all laid under ground; but may, in part, be carried along the basements of the first floors.

Q. Mischievous people will destroy them?

A. The same law which protects our windows and street lamps will protect our light-tubes.

Q. Will not the tubes burst, and be often out of repair?

A. This gas cannot possibly burst any tube, because it is above a thousand times lighter than water. It is elastic and compressible to the highest degree, and has no affinity either to steam or water. The pressure of water arises from its gravity, that of steam from sudden condensation, neither of which can in the least affect the nature of the cold and subtle fluid of gas. The hardest frost will never hurt it.

In the mean time contemporaneous and more genuine discoverers were also working. In 1802, Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Henry, lecturer at Manchester, explained how gas was produced,

and, ignoring the noisy foreigner, exhibited gas burning in an Argand lamp, on Mr. Murdoch's plan. He succeeded in obtaining gas from wood, peat, oil, and wax as easily as from coal, and made numerous careful experiments as to the relative value of coal as a light-producing power. He also especially studied the various means by which it could best be purified. In 1806, Mr. Josiah Pemberton, an intelligent and ingenious man, exhibited various forms of gas-lights in front of his manufactory at Birmingham, and was the first to construct gas stoves for the soldering required in the button factories; the toy factories also soon learned the value of the new power. This useful man made no secret of his inventions, and the artful effrontery and calculating selfishness of meaner men benefited by his frankness. It is reported that Mr. Cook, a toy manufacturer, to whom he had sold a stove, received, in 1810, a silver medal for its discovery. The race of Cooks has not by any means died out.

In 1807 (August 16), a few gentlemen, including the politically celebrated Alderman Wood, a public-spirited man, however fond of display, lit with gas the Golden-lane Brewery, and a part of Beech-street and Whitecross-street. The progress of even the rudest street lighting had not been rapid in London. In 1417 (Henry the Fifth), Sir Henry Barton, mayor of London, required every citizen to hang out a lantern after dark from Hallowtide to Candlemas. Paris was not lighted till 1524 (Henry the Eighth). In 1690 (William the Third), a special order was issued in London for citizens to hang out lanterns or lamps from Michaelmas to Christmas. In 1716 (George the First), housekeepers were again enjoined by an act of the Common Council to hang out lights every dark night from six to eleven o'clock, under pain of a penalty of one shilling. In 1736 (George the Second), the City applied to parliament for an act to enable them to erect street lamps; and in 1744, the year before Culloden, they obtained further powers for lighting the City. The admirable way in which they complementarily performed their civilising task may be seen in Hogarth's picture of the Arrest of the Rake in St. James's-street—a slovenly, ragged, tipsy-looking lad is on an awkward ladder, carelessly filling a clumsy street-lamp with fish-oil, which he is ruthlessly slopping over on the richly powdered head of a dandy beneath. As early as 1733 the vigorous town of Birmingham was lit by street-lamps, while London, less progressive and more conservative, remained three years later wilfully shutting her eyes to the necessity.

In the mean time, ignorant, impudent, but energetic Winsor went on confident of success, gradually teaching himself the secrets of his own subject. January 28, 1807, the strenuous German removed his exhibition to Pall-Mall, and there lighted up a part of the street, to the astonishment of the dandies. Gas was sneered at as offensive, dangerous, expensive, and unmanageable. Winsor was the butt of the day, but

he held firm, and his vanity and cupidity iron-plated him against all ridicule. He projected a National Heat and Light Company, and flung out pamphlets to flutter through the streets and spread abroad his sanguine hopes. He spoke of royal, noble, and scientific patrons in his old voluble and inflated way, talked of philanthropy (your projector always does), and promised that, for five pounds deposit, any person could be secured a handsome annual income in a concern whose profits would at once equal those of the New River Company. He was about, he said, to open a mine of wealth in Britain, and add to the despair of the foes who were devising her ruin. He assured the gull-world that he had now raised gas to its most clarified and perfect brilliance. The great discovery, like Aladdin's lamp, had got into bad hands.

Here is a part of one of Mr. Winsor's advertisements, dated 1807: "Official experiments proved one chaldron of coal to contain twenty-three pounds two shillings in value, which gives above two hundred and forty-two millions for the yearly consumption of the realm. The estimated savings are only rated at one hundred and fourteen millions eight hundred and forty-five thousand two hundred and ninety-four pounds, all costs of carbonising, &c., deducted; and if the company only realise one-tenth of this reduced sum, each five pound deposit will secure to the subscribers five hundred and seventy pounds per annum. Wonderful as this may appear, the estimates and experiments will stand the test of the best calculators and chemists." Another part of his scheme was to impose a tax upon coals, in order to promote the use of his gas and coke; this he calculated would produce a revenue of ten million seven hundred and fifty-one thousand pounds per annum to the government.

In 1808, Mr. Murdoch, the real genius of the discovery, read a paper to the Royal Society, clear, truthful, and simple, to show how largely gas had been used in a certain extensive factory (Messrs. Phillips and Lee) at Manchester. For this useful paper, Mr. Murdoch received Count Rumford's gold medal. The first great practical success of gas was here related, and soon became popularly known.

Mr. Murdoch said: "The whole of the rooms of the cotton-mill of Mr. Lee, at Manchester, which is, I believe, the most extensive in the United Kingdom, as well as its counting-houses and store-rooms and the adjacent dwelling-house of Mr. Lee, are lighted with gas from coal. The total quantity of light used during the hours of burning has been ascertained, by a comparison of shadows, to be about equal to the light which two thousand five hundred mould candles, of six to the pound, would give; each of the candles with which the comparison was made consuming four-tenths of an ounce (one hundred and seventy-five grains) of tallow per hour. The burners were of the

Argand and cockspur kind. The number used was nine hundred and twenty-four, requiring an hourly supply of one thousand two hundred and fifty cubic feet of cannel-coal gas. The annual consumption was calculated to be two thousand five hundred cubic feet per day, requiring each day seven hundred-weights of best Wigan coal. The annual consumption of coal would be one hundred and ten tons, and cost one hundred and twenty-five pounds, less the sale of coke at one shilling and fourpence the hundred-weight. This does not include the sale of one thousand two hundred and fifty gallons of tar annually produced from the coal. Allowing for interest of capital sunk, wear and tear, Mr. Lee calculated his annual payment for gas at about six hundred pounds. The cost of candles would have been about two thousand pounds annually. If lights were burnt three hours a day throughout the year instead of two, Mr. Murdoch calculated the cost of gas at six hundred and fifty pounds, and tallow candles at five thousand pounds. Mr. Lee stated before a committee of the House of Commons in May, 1809, that half a cubic foot of gas produced in one hour more light than one hundred and seventy-five grains of a six to the pound candle.

In 1809, Mr. Samuel Clegg received a silver medal from the Society of Arts for improvements in gas apparatus for factories. In this same year Winsor and his Pall-Mall patrons applied to parliament for an act to incorporate a company. This was the origin of the London and Westminster Chartered Gas Company. The capital proposed to be raised was two hundred thousand pounds. Mr. Murdoch opposed them warmly, and claimed priority of invention. Sir Humphry Davy and James Watt were examined. Both the applications failed, owing chiefly to the prejudice against Winsor and the horrible scalp-
ing given to Mr. Accum, one of the directors, by Mr. Brougham, who ridiculed his mathematics, exposed his science, and disproved his arithmetic. Brougham, like Sir Walter Scott, laughed gas-lighting to scorn. Whether he ever proved his conversion by helping to start a new gas company, as Sir Walter did, we do not know.

But nothing could tire out Winsor. In 1810, another application was made to parliament; and, though his friends encountered some opposition and incurred considerable expense, he succeeded in obtaining an act to authorise a royal charter, within three years from the time of the passing of the act. But the bill, as originally introduced, was materially altered, and certain conditions were imposed, which limited the company's powers to London, Westminster, Southwark, and the suburbs adjacent. Besides, it was stipulated that, if required, they should contract with the parishes of London, Westminster, and Southwark, to furnish a stronger and better light, and at a cheaper and lower price, all expenses included, than such parishes could be supplied with oil, if lighted in the usual manner. Their capital was limited to

two hundred thousand pounds, which was to be raised in shares of fifty pounds each.*

Winsor was triumphant at last; but he was only a sham discoverer, and one feels no interest in his success. All the first attempts at gas-lighting, by the persons who afterwards formed the Chartered Gas Company, were made in Pall-Mall. But after they became a legalised body, they purchased the lease of a large wharf and premises in Cannon-row, Westminster; however, they found the place inconvenient, and were afterwards obliged to abandon it. Their experiments at this place were very expensive, and absorbed nearly the whole of their first deposits of ten pounds per share on the four thousand of which the company consisted.

After having expended so much with Mr. Winsor, and the first deposits being exhausted, with little apparent effect, the proprietors became dissatisfied; but although their labours had been attended with no profit, and with very little fame, they steadily pursued their plans, and made the necessary purchases for their different stations. They first obtained that in Peter-street, Westminster, afterwards that in Curtain-road, and lastly that in Brick-lane.

Still the company went on in full belief of their own principles, and laying down boldly the great central mains that were certain soon to be required. In 1813 they appointed Mr. Samuel Clegg as their engineer, and under his efforts daylight began slowly to dawn. Yet, still the ten-pound shares would only sell for two, and the cry was for more and more money. Mr. Clegg's experiments were not always at first successful. The mains he laid down were too small. In 1813 the terrorists and conservative croakers were delighted by an explosion happening at the Westminster Gas-works, which knocked down two nine-inch walls, scorched Mr. Clegg's hair, and blew off his hat. A committee of the Royal Society was appointed to inquire into this accident, and the report of that body gave confidence to the public, and led to improvement in gas apparatus.

Gas now flamed up brighter. The City of London Company was started, and two others projected. In 1816, the old company applied for power to augment their capital by two hundred thousand pounds more. This they obtained under restrictions from the Home Department. Soon after, Mr. Clegg, inventor of the gas-meter, encouraged customers, and helped to preserve the gas companies from fraud. Great prejudice against gas, however, still continued. On the debate on the gas bill, June 11, 1816, the tone of the enlightened House was against the certain injury it would do to the whale fisheries, one of the great nurseries of our navy. Alderman Atkins complained of the exclusive privileges claimed by this bill, and that the measure was likely to ruin the hardy race of men employed in the southern and Greenland whale fisheries,

in each of which a million of money and above one hundred ships were employed. If the bill were passed, it would throw out of employ ten thousand seamen, and above ten thousand rope-makers, sail-makers, mast-makers, &c., connected with that trade.

In the House of Lords, the danger of gas monopoly, now so bitterly felt in London, was clearly seen. The Earl of Harrowby observed that, although the bill did not in terms give a monopoly, yet the effect of it, by giving the means of raising an additional capital of two hundred thousand pounds, would be in all probability to enable the company to destroy competition, and secure to themselves a monopoly. He did not make this objection with a view to the whale fisheries, admitting that they ought not to stand in the way of improvements in science, but with a view to this beautiful and excellent light itself, which was now furnished in different quarters of the town by private companies, and this corporation would, by this bill, possess the means of extinguishing those private companies and securing to themselves a monopoly. The old ignorant preference of class-interests over the interests of mankind at large.

In 1814, when the Royal Society visited the London Gas Works, there was only one gasometer, holding fourteen thousand cubic feet of gas. When Sir William Congreve reported on them in 1822, the Peter-street station alone was producing annually one hundred and eleven million three hundred and eighty-four thousand cubic feet of gas. There were annually used in London three hundred and ninety-seven million cubic feet, lighting sixty-one thousand two hundred and five private and seven thousand two hundred and sixty-eight street-lamps. This did not include several private companies. Yet gas was still so little used in the poorer districts, that in the Whitechapel works two large *canvas bags* were used as gasometers.

In 1827, the number of public gas companies in the United Kingdom amounted to two hundred. The young giant grew fast. The gas-pipes in and round London now extend over upwards of two thousand miles, and are still extending as fast as the feelers of Victor Hugo's terrible sea-monster.

What became of Winsor we do not know. It is certain that he became rich, but was probably elbowed out, with all his bluster and pretension, when grave, thoughtful, practical merchants took up the question, and began to distinctly work out some new road to wealth. It was only the other day that, pacing silently down the solemnly yet vulgar Avenue des Maréchaux at Père la Chaise, we came upon his pompous tomb, arched and ornamented in the cold sham Greek manner, and crowned with a huge bronze tripod surmounted by gilt flames: the tomb of a charlatan, buried in the charlatan manner.

In 1792 the blue gas-flame first sprang hissing up to do real work for man, when Mr. Murdoch applied a light to the pungent coal spirit. It is now 1867, and we are still far

* One of Winsor's shares is in the possession of the writer.

from comfortable with our new servant. Its price in London is enormous, arbitrary, and artificial, and the gas itself gets daily feebly paler and more full of carbon, in spite of all the progress of science. It is also still necessary to discover some means by which, when gas is burnt in sitting-rooms, the air can be kept moderately cool and moist.

THE CASE OF LEBRUN.

THE Dame Mazel was a haughty lady, who lived alone (excepting her retainers) in a large hôtel in the Rue Maçons-Sorbonne, Paris. In the latter half of the seventeenth century, women of quality thought they could do much as they liked, and Madame Mazel, rich and a widow, did not differ greatly from the rest of her class. She gave grand receptions on stated days, with sharp card-playing and splendid suppers. At other times, her sole though not her constant companion was the Abbé Poulard.

At the epoch when these events occurred, almost every wealthy house reckoned among its guests—we might say among its parasites—one or more ecclesiastics of greater or less respectability. The Dame Mazel harboured an unfrocked monk. Did the Abbé Poulard act as the lady's confessor? Or was he bound to her by dearer ties? All that was known for certain was, that he took up his quarters in the house as if it belonged to him, finding fault with the servants, hard to please in respect to bed and board, irregular in his habits, and not concealing his contempt for the rules of the Church on abstinence days and during Lent. At table he spoke with authority, discussing the merits of dishes and their sauces, and worrying the old cook-maid almost to death. His bedroom was like a lady's boudoir, full of trinkets, ornaments, and luxurious furniture. So completely was this self-indulgent cell to his taste, that, in 1673, he submitted to excommunication by the Prior of Cluny rather than quit it.

In spite, however, of his fondness for his bower, he was not satisfied with that alone. In order to be thoroughly at liberty, he hired a room in the neighbourhood, where he frequently slept. On those occasions he returned to the hôtel noiselessly, early in the morning, by means of a master-key with which he could open the street door at pleasure.

The personage of next importance in the household was Jacques Lebrun, who, at the age of sixteen, had entered Madame Mazel's service as valet-de-chambre. He had now lived with her nine-and-twenty years, serving her faithfully, and enjoying her full confidence. Although at forty-five he was still called the valet-de-chambre, he had in reality become the maître d'hôtel, the steward. It was he who bought everything, who paid the tradesmen, who gave orders for repairs and renovations. The cash and the plate were under his charge, and he locked them up in a strong-box kept in a secret hiding-

place. His long-tried integrity was above all suspicion; and in those days an old servant became almost a member of the family. He was at once a domestic and a friend. He was set down in Madame Mazel's will for a legacy of six thousand francs, with the half of the clothes, and the household linen.

Lebrun was married, and lived happily with his wife; he brought up his children religiously. His duties, which were strict and numerous, did not allow him to have his family in the house. The Dame Mazel had indeed offered him apartments in the upper story, where there was more than accommodation enough for two such families as his; but on her reception-days—twice a week—when her mansion was frequented by fashionable people, it was also thronged by lackeys waiting for their masters and mistresses, whose loose style of conduct and conversation seemed to Lebrun to be anything but a proper example for his own young folk. He therefore installed them in a lodging close by. The establishment consisted, besides Lebrun, of two housemaids, a cook, a coachman, and two little lackeys.

Madame Mazel's hôtel was four stories high. You reached the first floor by the grand staircase, passing through a room which served as a pantry, and containing a closet in which the table service was locked up. One of the housemaids kept the key. In this room, on the side next the street, a portion had been partitioned off, where Lebrun slept when he did not pass the night at home. The rest of this story consisted of a suite of state apartments in which madame received company when she gave her card and supper parties. Her bedroom was on the second floor, looking into the court. It was reached by two ante-chambers, one of which, opening on the grand staircase, was always left open; the other was fastened when the lady had retired to rest. She was the only person who slept on this story of the house. Two doors led out of her bedroom; one opened on a little back staircase, the other led to a wardrobe which also had an outlet on the same little staircase. The first of these doors was at the side of the bed next the wall, and Madame Mazel could open it without rising. At the head of the bed, hung a couple of bell-pulls, corresponding to the chambers of the two housemaids. In the wardrobe was a closet, the key of which was laid on Madame Mazel's bolster; and in this closet was the key of the strong-box.

The third story of the hôtel was completely untenanted, except the chamber occupied by the Abbé Poulard, which was situated over the wardrobe. It was entered by the back staircase, which led to the door at Madame Mazel's bedside. On the fourth story, the two femmes-de-chambre and the two little lackeys slept. The cook slept down-stairs in a woodhouse; the coachman, in a nook under the staircase. The latter had charge of the great coach door leading into the street, the key of which hung on a nail in the kitchen ready for use by any of

the inmates of the house. The roof of the hôtel formed a vast attic, always open, and in which there was a garret window allowing access to a broad rain-gutter running along the bottom of two sloping roofs, which was prolonged for a considerable distance, along the row of houses. The door of this attic was never closed.

Some time before our story opens, Madame Mazel had asked Lebrun for a master-key which he made use of to go in and out as he wanted. She gave it to the Abbé Poulard. Lebrun, however, had a second master-key, and continued to employ it for the same purpose as before.

On the first Sunday in Advent, the 27th of November, 1689, Lebrun's daughters came to pay their respects to the Dame Mazel after her dinner. She received them as usual, kindly, requested them to come and see her again, and left them to go to vespers. Lebrun gave his arm to his mistress, the two little lackeys following them. When he saw her comfortably seated on her bench in the chapel of the Convent of the Prémontré Nuns, Rue Hautefeuille, he was at liberty until the conclusion of the service. He went and gossiped with the cook's husband, one Lagée, a locksmith. They agreed that their two families should pic-nic together that evening, so they went to a cook-shop to buy something for supper. Lebrun ran for a moment to his wife's lodgings, and then at eight o'clock he went to the house of one Dame Duvan, where he was to find his mistress, the coachman, and the two little lackeys. After conducting his mistress to her hôtel, he returned to his friend Lagée.

The Dame Mazel supped tête-à-tête with the Abbé Poulard as usual. During the repast, the abbé announced that he intended sleeping out, in his other chamber. The Dame Mazel went to bed at about eleven o'clock. Lebrun had stayed late at his pic-nic supper. Just as the two waiting-women, after undressing their mistress, were preparing to retire, they heard him scratching* at the back staircase door.

"Who is there?" asked the Dame Mazel.

"'Tis M. Lebrun," said the femme-de-chambre.

"A pretty time of night!" exclaimed the irritable lady.

Finding that they did not let him in by that way, Lebrun retired, went round, and returned to the chamber by the grand staircase. His mistress gave her orders for next day's supper, which was a reception-day. He then finished his service for the night in the customary way. He closed the door of the chamber by pulling it after him, after laying the key on a chair inside; then, as was his practice every evening, he locked the door of the second ante-chamber and laid the key on the chimney-piece of the

first—i.e. of that first entered from the grand staircase.

That done, Lebrun went down into the kitchen, laid his hat upon the table, took the key of the great door with the intention of locking it, but first warmed himself before the logs which still blazed on the hearth. Insensibly he fell asleep; his sociable supper had made him drowsy. When he awoke, he went and locked the door, which he found wide open, and took the key with him to his sleeping-place.

Early next morning he started on his errands. He had to go to the butcher's, and make preparations for the evening's supper. He met a bookseller, with whom he had a friendly gossip. His remarks were cheerful, even jocose. At the butcher's, he hurried the sending of the soup-meat; his mistress would want a basin of broth before it was late. Returned to the hôtel, he met three of his friends near the door; he insisted on their stepping into the kitchen for a moment. He was in such a merry mood, that, taking off his cloak and putting it on the shoulders of one of the party, he pretended to thrash him with a leg of mutton, saying, "I have the right to beat my own cloak as much as I please." He then cast an eye on the preparations for supper, and gave one of the little lackeys some wood to carry up to madame's chamber. Meanwhile, the clock struck eight, and his mistress had not yet rung for her waiting-maids. Lebrun noticed it, and appeared uneasy. The Dame Mazel usually awoke at seven.

He fidgeted about a few minutes longer, continually expecting the bell to ring. He stepped out of doors for an instant and went to his wife's, to give her seven louis-d'ors and a few crowns, which he did not wish to keep loose in his pocket. On leaving her, he said, "Madame is not yet awake; I don't know what can be the meaning of it."

He found the servants seriously alarmed at their mistress's silence. They resolved to go up-stairs and knock at the several doors of her room, shouting, "Madame Mazel! Madame Mazel!"

No reply was made.

"Can she have had a fit?" said one of the servants.

"It must be something worse than that," replied Lebrun. "I don't at all like finding the coach door wide open last night."

They sent for Madame Mazel's eldest son. He knocked at the door with no better result, and then sent to fetch a locksmith. "What can it be?" he asked Lebrun. "It must be apoplexy."

"If we sent for a surgeon in any case?" suggested one of the waiting-women.

"It is not that," said Lebrun; "it is much worse; there must have been foul play. I am very uneasy about the coach doors being open last night."

The locksmith opened the bedchamber door. Lebrun, the first to enter, ran to the bed, drew

* "When you call to pay a visit, knock or ring very gently, just enough to make yourself heard. Formerly it was considered bon ton to do no more than scratch at a great man's door."—*La Politesse Française*, par E. Muller.

aside the curtains, and exclaimed, "Madame has been murdered!" He then went to the wardrobe, and took out one of the bars of the window, to give more light. The Dame Mazel was seen stretched on her bed in a pool of blood. Her face, neck, and hands, were covered with wounds.

At this sad spectacle, Lebrun's first thought seems to have been that robbery could have been the only motive for his mistress's murder. He ran to the strong-box and raised it; the lock was uninjured. "She has not been robbed," he said. "What can that mean?"

On examination, fifty wounds, apparently made with a knife, were found on the body. Not one of them in itself was mortal. Loss of blood was the sole cause of death. The victim might, therefore, have called for help. In the bed was found a piece of a cravat with embroidered ends stained with blood, and a napkin twisted into a nightcap, still retaining the form of the head which had worn it. The napkin, much blood-stained, bore the mark of the house. It was presumed that the victim, struggling in self-defence, had snatched from her assassin this bit of cravat and this improvised cap. Between the slashed fingers of the defunct were a few hairs, quite unlike Madame Mazel's hair, and which she had evidently torn from the murderer in her moment of despair. A knife was found in the ashes of the hearth. The two bell-pulls were tied in two knots to the curtain-rod, so that pulling them had no effect on the bells. The key of the chamber was not on the chair where it was usually placed every night; there was no trace of violence on the doors, either of the chamber or the ante-chamber. The two doors opening on the back staircase were fastened inside with hooks. The key of the closet was in its customary place on the bolster. When the closet was opened, they found there the purse in which Madame Mazel kept her card-money; it contained nearly three hundred francs. The key of the strong-box was still in the closet; they opened it, and it contained several bags full of silver, an open purse, at the bottom of which was a half-louis-d'or, and all the victim's jewels, valued at fifteen thousand francs. Lastly, Madame Mazel's pockets contained eighteen pistoles in gold. At first sight, it was easy to suppose that theft had not been the motive of the murder.

On searching Lebrun, they found upon him the key of the pantry, and a master-key which would open the first turn of the bedroom lock. This fixed suspicion on him, and he was not allowed to go out of sight. They tried on his head the napkin twisted into a cap; it was much too small for him. They examined his hands, which he had not yet washed. He was made to wash them: they bore no trace of blood—not a sign of a scratch. His box was inspected; nothing suspicious was found. Nevertheless, the master-key seemed to witness against him. He and his wife were immediately arrested.

Next day, the 29th of November, the lieu-

tenant-criminel made a fresh inquiry. The idea struck him, a little late, to examine the back staircase. He found on one of the lowest steps, a new rope, very long, ending in a triple iron hook, and tied into knots at intervals so as to serve as a sort of ladder. The same day, they found in a corner of the attic a shirt whose front and sleeves were bloody, and a cravat collar stained with blood at both ends. If this linen belonged to Lebrun, it was surprising that no marks of recent washing were to be found on his hands or on his neck.

An expert wig-maker affirmed that there was no resemblance, either in colour or stoutness, between the hairs found in the victim's fingers and Lebrun's hair. Cutlers interested in the task, declared that there was no relation between the knives in Lebrun's possession and the knife which the murderer had thrown into the fire. None of the ropes in the pantry, in the house, in Lebrun's lodging, had anything to do with the knotted rope of the back staircase. These negative proofs of innocence had no weight. The prosecution closed their eyes to them. All they would see was, that, although Madame Mazel had taken back her master-key, Lebrun still possessed another; that when they talked of apoplexy, he expressed his belief that "something worse" had occurred. His motive was impatience to touch the legacy of six thousand francs, and the rest. The rope on the back stairs (which had not been used, as the knots were not drawn tight), and the bloody shirt hidden in the garret, were merely tricks to direct suspicion to some one else; while every circumstance implied a complete knowledge of the ways of the house.

Nevertheless, seamstresses called in to express an opinion on the linen found, declared that there was no resemblance between the bloody shirt and Lebrun's linen. Moreover, there was a femme-de-chambre who believed she remembered washing a singular shirt for a lackey of the name of Berry who had been turned out of the house for dishonesty. Another said she had seen Berry wear an embroidered cravat resembling the bit torn from the murderer's neck. This significant clue was not followed up.

Moreover, the Dame Mazel had three sons, in high positions. The eldest, René de Savonnières, was a counsellor of parlement; the second, Georges de Savonnières, lord of Lignères, was a treasurer of France for the generality of Paris; the youngest, Michel de Savonnières, was a major in the regiment de Piemont. Now, fifteen years before, René, the eldest, had married a young person whose scandalous conduct provoked Madame Mazel's high displeasure. The angry dame obtained against her daughter-in-law a lettre de cachet, with which she had kept her imprisoned more than twelve years in a provincial convent. But the counsellor was very fond of his wife, and consented to the separation only from a sense of filial duty, perhaps also through fear of the effect which resistance might have on his mother's will. Young Madame de Savonnières had seve-

ral times escaped from her cloister prison; but the mother-in-law, watchful and implacable, soon had her taken back again.

There was a rumour, and its truth was ascertained, that in the month of March, 1685, at the same time that Berry robbed the Dame Mazel of a sum of fifteen hundred francs, Madame de Savonnières was concealed in Paris. Towards the close of August she again broke loose, and again remained hidden for a certain time in a house in the Faubourg Saint-Germain. She said to one of her friends, "This will not last long. *In three months* I shall have no need to hide myself, but shall return publicly to my husband's house."

No conclusion or inference was drawn from these curious coincidences. Such was the state of society then, that Lebrun's advocate dared not insist on their significance. Neither the lieutenant-criminel nor the judges of the Châtelet hesitated to sacrifice Lebrun's innocent head to the influential people who were interested in concealing the real source of the crime. Lebrun was only a poor unprotected wretch, who could be found guilty without any great distortion of facts. All they had to do was to keep silence respecting certain double-edged circumstances. Thus, Madame de Savonnières was shut up in a convent at Bourges; Berry was a Bourges man; yet no one asked where Madame de Savonnières was, nor what incautious expressions she had let fall. Witnesses declared that the bloody shirt and eravat belonged to Berry; notwithstanding which, Berry was not even named by the prosecution. Nor was the Abbé Poulard examined.

And yet there were other reasons besides his suspicious relations with the deceased, which ought to have caused his examination. It was not of very important purport that he should be named in Madame Mazel's will, not for any special legacy, but for the continuation of the same advantages which he had enjoyed during her lifetime. M. de Savonnières the elder was bound to board and lodge the excommunicated monk. But the ex-Dominican had a sister, a widow, Madame Chapelain by name. This person, penniless like her brother, and with an attractive countenance, was publicly sought by M. de Savonnières de Lignéres, Madame Mazel's second son. In spite of her poverty, she hoped to get the young treasurer to marry her. By clever coquetry and artful resistance she managed to shut his eyes to the ill-assortment of their union. The Dame Mazel, absolute in her will, opposed the marriage; the Abbé Poulard ardently desired it. Only six months before the crime, Madame Chapelain, all the while persisting in her rigour, had accepted from her suitor costly presents, such as a complete dress, comprising even the shoes, made of gold and silver brocade. Here was an interest in Madame Mazel's death quite as powerful as poor Lebrun's.

The Abbé Poulard had lately obtained the master-key which Lebrun had been made to give up. During his last meal with the mur-

dered lady he repeatedly mentioned that he was going to sleep out that night. He had well known, at Madame Mazel's, the lackey Berry, afterwards discharged for theft. Still he was not interrogated.

Another thing told much against him. Ever since the commission of the deed, he industriously spread strange and inconsistent reports respecting Lebrun. Sometimes, he accused him of being the sole agent in the murder, mixing up calumnious insinuations on the memory of his benefactress: sometimes, he charged him with complicity with Berry, whom the prosecution persisted in leaving in the shade. "The Dame Mazel," the ex-monk stated, "had a child in her youth by a grand seigneur, who left a considerable sum to bring it up. This child was no other than Berry, afterwards lackey to his own mother. Lebrun, aware of his mistress's errors, had revealed to Berry the secret of his birth, in the hope of making him his son-in-law. When driven from the maternal residence, Lebrun had tried to reinstate him, introducing him by night into his mother's bedroom. Berry had tried to soften her, in vain. Yielding to her violent temper, she had seized him by the throat; on which he drew his knife in self-defence, and killed her without premeditation."

This absurd romance, combined with Poulard's interest in Madame Mazel's death, awakened the suspicions of the defence; but the prosecution would listen to nothing. The master-key was poor Lebrun's ruin. Of eleven judges, three voted for further inquiry, three for the preparatory "question" or torture, six for a sentence to death.

The sentence actually pronounced on the 18th of January, 1690, declared Lebrun "attained and convicted of having taken part in the murder of the Dame Mazel; in reparation of which he is condemned to make honourable amends, to be broken alive and to die on the wheel, after the previous application of the ordinary and the extraordinary question to obtain the revelation of his accomplices; all his goods confiscated to the king, or to whom appertains the right, first mulcting them with the sum of five hundred francs of fine, in case the confiscation is not to the king's profit; eight hundred francs of civil reparation and damages to the Messieurs de Savonnières; one hundred francs to pray God for the soul of the Dame Mazel; the said Lebrun declared unworthy of the dispositions and legacies made in his favour in the will of the said Dame Mazel, and condemned to all the costs; suspension of further inquiry against Madeleine Tisserel, wife of Lebrun, until after the execution."

Lebrun appealed against this sentence before the Tournelle. On the 22nd of February, the affair was brought on for consideration. Twenty-two judges voted; two only for the confirmation of the sentence, four for further investigation, the remaining sixteen for the ordinary and extraordinary question. On the 23rd, M. le Nain, reporter, proceeded to the application of

the torture. The fearful sufferings of the rack were unable to extort from the unhappy man the confession of a crime which he had not committed.

On the 27th, a definitive sentence was pronounced, quashing the sentence of death delivered by the Châtelet, and ordering further inquiries against Lebrun and his wife during the space of a year: Lebrun, meanwhile, to be detained in prison, and his wife to remain at liberty. The question of the nullity of the legacy, and of damages, was reserved. In consequence of this sentence, Lebrun, who had hitherto been kept in strict seclusion, had at last the consolation of seeing his wife and friends. But he did not enjoy the favour long. His body had been crushed by the rack, his spirit was broken down by grief. A week after the sentence, he expired, protesting his innocence and pardoning his judges. It is to be remarked that public opinion, ready as it is to believe any accusation, never once admitted his culpability. His body was buried in front of the altar to the Virgin, in St. Barthélemy's church. His funeral was attended by crowds of sorrowing relations and friends.

Scarcely was poor Lebrun laid in his grave, when proofs of his innocence appeared in all directions. What a few persons had suspected, and what still fewer had clearly perceived, became evident to the eyes of the public at large. They found Berry. A lieutenant of the horse patrol arrested him at Sens, where he lived by horse-dealing, on the 27th of March, a month after the sentence delivered at La Tournelle. When they laid hands upon him, he offered the leader of the brigade a purse full of louis-d'ors if he would let him go. They found upon him a watch which Madame Mazel had worn the day before her death.

Berry (whose real name was Gerlat) was, as we have said, born at Bourges, where his father and mother still resided. His first situation had been with a canon in his native town; he then lived as domestic with a M. Benard de Rosé; and from thence he passed into Madame Mazel's service.

Transferred to Paris, several witnesses deposed that they had seen him there at the time of the murder. This he stoutly denied.

The facts imputed by public rumour to the Abbé Poulard, were too grave and glaring to make it possible to refrain from arresting him. He was taken to the Conciergerie and confronted with Berry. From that moment, all trace of him is lost. He disappeared, and was never mentioned afterwards. Doubtless, to avoid the scandal of an ecclesiastic's being mixed up with an affair of murder, perhaps also to avert a disgraceful exposure from the powerful family of the De Savonnières, they handed over the excommunicated monk to the tender mercies of the Church authorities.

As to Berry, he was left to his fate. His guilt became manifest as soon as people chose to see it. The shirt and the cravat had really belonged to him. The napkin twisted into a

cap fitted his head exactly. The knife had been seen in his hands, and the victim's watch was found on his person. It was impossible to entertain a doubt. But had Lebrun been Berry's accomplice? The latter, unable to deny participating in the murder, endeavoured, nevertheless, to accuse the valet-de-chambre of having suggested it: but on the day of his execution he acknowledged the truth, and relieved his conscience of that calumny. In the presence of Reporter Le Nain and Counsellor Gilbert he made a circumstantial statement, from which it appears that he, Gerlat, alias Berry, was the sole perpetrator of the murder and the theft.

"I arrived in Paris," he said, "on Wednesday, the 23rd of November, 1689, and put up at the sign of the Golden Waggon. My plans were laid. I was perfectly acquainted with the disposition and the habits of the Mazel establishment. The following Friday was the day I selected for the execution of my design. At dusk, I quickly slipped in by the great door, which was left open; there was nobody in the court. I then mounted noiselessly into the little attic which you reach by passing through the corn-loft. I remained there until Sunday, watching my opportunity, and living on some potatoes and a little bread which I had brought with me.

"On Sunday morning, I was on the alert. At the first stroke of eleven I began my preparations; I well knew that at that hour Madame Mazel usually went to mass. I came down slowly from the attic, using every precaution. Madame's chamber was wide open, and nobody in it. From the dust, I judged that the maids had only just finished putting it to rights. Without loss of time, I tried to creep under the bed, but found it impossible to do so with my coat on. Fearing a surprise, I rapidly returned to the attic, where I took off my coat and under-waistcoat, and came down again to the chamber in my shirt-sleeves. It was still unoccupied.

"I slipped under the bed, and soon heard my former mistress come back from church. She fidgeted about, grumbled, scolded, and made a fuss. I kept quiet and snug, holding my breath.

"She went to vespers. When I heard the carriage roll out at the great gate, I came from under the bed, where I was ill at ease. My hat incommoded me, so I left it there and took a napkin from behind the looking-glass, and tied it up so as to form a cap. I also took advantage of the opportunity to tie up the bell-ropes to the curtain-rods.

"Evening was coming on; all was ready. I warmed myself and enjoyed a short doze in madame's arm-chair, until I heard the carriage roll into the court. I then got under the bed again, and remained there until midnight.

"Madame Mazel had been in bed an hour; I expected to find her fast asleep, but her eyes were wide open. She stared at me. 'I want money!' I said. She tried to sit up in the bed.

'Don't call out, madame,' I said to her, softly. 'If you call out, I will kill you!' She stretched out her arm, but could not reach the bell-ropes. She began screaming 'Help! help!' At that, seeing that her fright prevented her listening to reason, I drew my knife and gave her several stabs. She made a slight attempt to defend herself; but soon, her strength failing, she sank down in the bed with her face on the counterpane. I then gave her a great many cuts, until she ceased to stir. If she had not screamed, I should not have killed her.

"That done, I lighted a candle and took from the bedside the key of the closet. In the closet I found the keys of the strong-box, which I opened without any difficulty. I took all the gold there was in a purse; it might amount to five or six thousand francs. I put that sum into a linen bag which I took out of the strong-box, and in which there was a little gold. I then closed the strong-box, and put the keys in their place in the closet, where I found a watch which tempted me.

"I put the key of the closet close to the bed in its usual place; I threw my knife into the fire. As to my cravat, and the napkin which I made into a cap, I cannot tell how I lost them. I took my hat from under the bed and left the chamber, the key of which I found on a seat close to the door. I made use of it to shut the door, fearing if I pulled the door without the key, to make too much noise. The door of the ante-chamber was shut; I opened it, and left it open.

"I then returned to the little attic; it was bright moonlight. I saw that my hands were all red, and I washed them with my urine. I took off my shirt, and left it under the straw. I do not know whether I also left my cravat or collar there. I put on my under-waistcoat and coat without any shirt, and went down-stairs. It might then be an hour after midnight. I went to the street door and felt if it was bolted; finding it unbolted, I opened the wicket door and went out, leaving the door open.

"In case of the bolts being close, I had brought a rope ladder, by which I meant to descend from one of the first floor windows. If I could not do that, I should have followed the rain-gutter of the great attic until I found an entrance into some neighbouring house. Once out of doors, I threw the key of the chamber into a cellar in the Rue de Maçon, and returned to the Golden Waggon. A half-asleep maid-servant let me in, and I then went to bed."

On concluding this general confession, Berry added: "What I have just stated is as true as that God is in heaven and that I hold this crucifix in my hands." He said nothing about family complicities or promptings, which were supposed to be at the bottom of the affair; at

least, if he did, all that part of the business was suppressed. Berry was executed. He died with courage.

Lebrun's innocence being completely proved, the rehabilitation of his memory, the restitution of the widow's property, and the payment of his legacy, ought not to have met with the slightest difficulty; nevertheless, by a monstrous abuse of power, seven whole months passed away without the widow's being able to obtain redress. By tormenting and intimidating the unhappy woman, they tried to frighten her into stopping the action for damages which she brought against M. de Savonnières. The civil court had condemned Lebrun to the cruel torture which was the cause of his death; it was at least bound to make the widow the only possible reparation—an indemnity. M. de Savonnières was mean enough not to understand that obligation. He resisted the claim for damages.

On the 30th of March, 1694, a decree of the parlement reinstated Lebrun's memory, and, in spite of Counsellor de Savonnières' resistance, confirmed the legacy of six thousand francs. But the De Savonnières carried every other point. They were simply sentenced to pay the costs and the interest on the sum bequeathed from the 27th of November, 1689. The torture and death of the honest servant, the ruin of his family, counted for nothing. M. de Savonnières was a magistrate, influential, rich, held in high consideration; the valet's widow might deem herself fortunate in being able to obtain even partial justice. This is one of the cases which, constantly accumulating in number and never decreasing in iniquity, tended to bring about the terrible social revolt known as the First French Revolution.

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[PRICE 2d.]

MABEL'S PROGRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

BOOK VI.

CHAPTER III. JACK'S TIDINGS.

JACK'S reception by his newly found friend and patron, was most kind and cordial. The young painter was highly delighted with Mr. M'Culloch's collection of pictures, and with the old Scotchman's shrewd apt criticisms on them. "He doesn't talk technical jargon, you know," said Jack, eulogistically; "doesn't knock about chiar'oscuro, and middle distances, and breadth of handling, or anything of that kind. Neither does he go in for High Art, nor make himself unintelligibly imposing by kicking up a dust of words that convey nothing to commonplace people like me. But, for all that, he practically knows a good picture when he sees one; and he's moreover an uncommonly jolly old blade in his douce Scotch fashion, and can take off his tumbler of punch—toddy, he calls it—in first-rate style."

One morning, Jack, lounging into the garden of Desmond Lodge from the Hawthorns (at which latter place he had taken up his abode for a day or two), found Mabel alone on the lawn with a book open on her knees, and her eyes fixed on the distant city seen through an opening between the trees. She was very still, and was unaware of his approach until he was quite close upon her.

"I wonder," said Jack, looking over her shoulder at the smoke-veiled roofs of London, "what new triumphs the popular actress was contemplating so earnestly in the future!"

"I was contemplating nothing in the future, Jack. I was looking back, back—oh, a long way! Not so exhilarating a view, perhaps. But it has a sad charm of its own, and is not without its value in this busy work-a-day world."

The cousins remained silent for a while, side by side; Jack looking at the landscape with a painter's eye, and Mabel gazing in dreamy abstraction before her. After a time, Jack spoke abruptly, and put the unexpected question:

"Do you know anything about handwritings, Mabel?"

"About handwritings? I know whether I can read them or not."

"Of course; but I mean—can you judge

character by the handwriting, or do anything of that sort that people profess to do?"

"Nothing whatever."

"You couldn't give a guess at the kind of person who might have written such and such a hand, for example?"

"Good gracious, Jack, certainly not! Why do you ask?"

"A conversation that I had with Mr. M'Culloch last night put it into my head to do so. He was telling me such a queer story—by the way, you knew some people of the name of Charlewood, in Hammerham, did you not?"

Mabel's heart seemed to stand still for a moment, but she answered quite quietly, "I knew them well."

"Yes; I remember hearing my mother talk of your rich friends; and that handsome Irish girl who came to see you in Kelly's-square was a relation of theirs, wasn't she? No! Well, no matter. It seems these Charlewoods fell into terrible misfortune. The firm smashed up, owing to those great bank failures, and they say that the father, old Charlewood—Ah, you know the story. But that's not what I had to say. The eldest son, an uncommonly plucky fellow, gave up everything to the creditors in the most straightforward manner, and came to London in a position of trust in old M'Culloch's house. They're builders, you know, and Charlewood understands the whole thing thoroughly, and is in every respect a first-rate chap, from all I hear."

"What was the strange story Mr. M'Culloch related to you, Jack?" asked Mabel, with her hands clasped nervously together, and her pale face turned away from her cousin.

"Oh, to be sure. About the writing. Well, it is the most mysterious thing you can fancy. For the last two months and more, M'Culloch has been receiving anonymous letters accusing young Charlewood of every kind of villainess. Drinking, gambling, speculation, hypocrisy, and so forth. The queer thing is, that Charlewood can't pitch upon any enemy he has in the world likely to attack him in so abominable a manner. And yet the letters are written by some one who knew the family well, for there are little details of their life at Hammerham, and since they have been in London, all given correctly. M'Culloch is warned not to trust Charlewood in the smallest degree, and, indeed, is urged to get rid of him without delay."

"And this gentleman—the—the employer, does he credit the anonymous dastardly villain?"

"Who, M'Culloch? Not he! Bless you, he is a fine honest-hearted old fellow. He loyally showed these letters to Charlewood from the very first. But, at the same time, it is an irritating, anxious thing to have these kind of accusations constantly and perseveringly made. You see, Charlewood is in a very responsible position, and has the command of large sums of money belonging to M'Culloch, and——"

"He cannot suspect his probity! It is impossible. No one who knew Clement Charlewood could doubt him for an instant."

Mabel had risen and faced her cousin with eyes in which tears of indignation were glistening.

"Why, Mabel! I did not know that you would take it so much to heart."

"I do take it to heart," she answered, bravely, though the bright colour mounted to her brow. "Clement Charlewood was a kind and true friend to us, and I know him to be as honourable and good a man as any under heaven."

Jack looked at her thoughtfully for a minute or two.

"I did not know that you had so much regard for these people, Mabel," he said, gravely. "I fancied they had behaved ill to you in some way. I suppose I got that impression from our 'snaky-eyed' friend—you remember? But, any way, one can't help feeling very sorry for these Charlewoods, for they are in terrible trouble just now."

"Oh, Jack, what is it? Tell me; pray tell me at once!" She spoke very quietly, but her knit brow and parted lips betrayed the eager anxiety with which she awaited his reply.

"Well, the younger brother—I forget his name——"

"Walter—Walter."

"Yes; Walter is missing."

"Missing?"

"Disappeared from his home; and they've been searching everywhere for these two days past, putting advertisements in the papers, and doing all they can to discover him and induce him to come back; but in vain, hitherto. From what I can hear, it would be no great loss to society in general if he never did turn up again. M'Culloch says that he was an extravagant, dissipated young scamp; and it comes out now that he was over head and ears in debt, unknown to his family, and that Charlewood has been half distracted by the discoveries that have been made since his brother's disappearance."

"Poor Clement!" murmured Mabel. "Ah! how he must suffer!"

"But you see," pursued Jack, "his mother, naturally enough, is not of my way of thinking. She is on a sick-bed—has got a kind of low nervous fever from anxiety—and they're all in a most pitiable condition."

"Jack," cried Mabel, with sudden resolution,

"will you do me a favour? Get the Charlewoods' address from Mr. M'Culloch. I will go and see them. I may not be able to help them, and probably shall not; but I know that the mere attempt to do so will be welcome to Mrs. Charlewood. It will be sweet to her to feel that she is remembered and cared for. She is a kind-hearted, affectionate-natured woman, and I was a great favourite of hers—long ago."

Mabel and her mother alighted from a cab at the beginning of the street called De Montfort Villas, on that same afternoon. They had judged it better not to drive up to the Charlewoods' door, for fear of disturbing and exciting the sick woman. The little servant—on whom Penelope's impressive injunctions to be very quiet had produced such an effect that she stole about the house on tiptoe and with much elaborate action of her elbows, and spoke in a hoarse whisper, which appeared to cost her exquisite pain—admitted the visitors, and promised to send down Miss Charlewood to them forthwith. Mrs. Saxelby looked round the poor parlour, and then out on to the waste ground.

"What a change for Mrs. Charlewood!" she murmured. "She who was surrounded with gilding and finery like an Indian idol—to think of her coming to be poor!"

"Her poverty is the least part of her sorrows, I should think, mamma," said Mabel.

As she spoke, the door opened softly, and Penelope Charlewood entered the room. She was not prepared to see them, for they had desired the servant merely to announce some old friends of Mrs. Charlewood. For a moment she stood still, surprised and irresolute; then she advanced and took Mrs. Saxelby's proffered hand, but with some coldness and constraint.

"I hope you will forgive our coming, Penelope," said Mabel's sweet thrilling voice. "I thought—I hoped, that mamma's face, as that of an old friend, might not be unwelcome to Mrs. Charlewood."

"You have come to a miserable house, Mabel Earnshaw," replied Penelope, turning towards her, and speaking in a tone rendered almost stern by the resolute repression of the emotion that was striving to master her self-possession.

"We heard of your trouble, and of your mother's illness," said Mabel, timidly laying her hand on Penelope's arm, "and I ventured to come—not intrusively or unfeelingly, believe me—but because I did so truly wish to see dear Mrs. Charlewood, and to beg that you would do me the great favour of letting me show in some way, however trifling, that I am not unmindful of your mother's goodness to me in the old days."

She spoke humbly, almost pleadingly, and there was no trace of the haughty curve on her lip which Penelope remembered so well. A thought of the last interview they had had passed through Penelope's mind, when the two girls had walked side by side up the little garden at Jessamine Cottage, and Mabel's sensitive pride had taken alarm so quickly at the hint respecting Clement.

Penny's rigid face relaxed; she put out her hand, and took Mabel's with a grasp that was almost painful in its strong pressure.

"Thank you, Penelope," said Mabel, softly.

Mrs. Saxelby seated herself beside Miss Charlewood, and proceeded to question her gently about her mother's illness, and to express her sympathy in a common-place, well-behaved way, which was more agreeable to Penelope, and helped her to regain her self-control more quickly, than the manifestation of any strong emotion could have done. Mrs. Charlewood was still very ill, suffering from nervous depression, and an exhausting kind of low fever. "She thinks," said Penelope, almost in a whisper, "that Walter is dead. No one else believes so. There is really no reason for any such apprehension, but there is no removing it from her mind. I dare scarcely leave her for a moment. When she is alone, she falls into violent fits of weeping that reduce her strength frightfully. Yesterday, I believe she was light-headed for some hours."

"May I see her? Or do you think it is better I should not do so?" asked Mrs. Saxelby.

"No; my impression is that it would be good for her to have her thoughts diverted even for a moment from the one topic. I will tell her you are here."

Penelope left the room, and after a short time returned, saying that her mother would see Mrs. Saxelby.

"And I? May I not see her too?" said Mabel.

"Not at present. You shall come afterwards, if she bears your mother's visit well."

Mrs. Saxelby and Penelope left the room, and Mabel sat alone there, contemplating the dreary waste of building-ground. Some men were beating carpets on it, and she watched them with apparently intense interest. But her thoughts were far away. A key turned in the street door, a soft footfall was heard in the passage. Mabel looked round, and found herself face to face with Clement Charlewood.

CHAPTER IV. UNFORGOTTEN.

CLEMENT stood gazing at the unexpected apparition in silent amazement. Indeed, for a second he half believed Mabel's motionless figure to be a delusion conjured up by his heated weary brain. He was worn down in body and mind with fatigue and anxiety. She rose and advanced towards him with extended hand. She tried to smile, but her lips quivered, and she struggled against violent agitation. How changed he was! Ah, how changed!

"I have startled you, I fear, Mr. Charlewood."

"My God, Mabel, is it you?"

His voice went to her heart, there was such sadness in it, such a yearning regret.

"I heard this morning about—about your brother. We were so sorry. Mamma wished to see Mrs. Charlewood. She is with her now. I—I hope you are not angry."

All this time she had been holding out her hand, of which he had taken no heed. Now she dropped it, and looked at him piteously, like a chidden child.

"Angry! No, Mabel, I am not angry."

He answered like one in a dream.

"May I speak to you as an old friend? As one to whom you were always kind and good, and who would serve you—if she might—with all her heart?"

He did not reply, and she went on rapidly.

"You will not be angry with me for saying what is in my mind? or I shall think you have not forgiven me—for—for some pain I caused you once."

He looked at her with a strange melancholy smile.

"I have forgiven you, Mabel. You need be under no apprehension of my anger, if that be of any importance to you."

"Then—I scarcely know how to say it—but—this is the great favour I have to beg of you. In this trouble about Walter, and your mother's illness, if there is any way—*any* way in the world—in which we can help you, you will not refuse to allow——"

She stammered and hesitated so as to be almost inarticulate. Whilst she was yet speaking, Clement put up his hand hastily to check her, and walked to the window, turning away his head.

"What is it you mean, Mabel?" he asked, after a short pause, which seemed to her to endure for hours. "Is it," he added, in a constrained voice—"is it money that you are offering me?"

"I—I meant—I hoped—oh, Mr. Charlewood, how can you speak so bitterly!"

All the self-command she was capable of exercising—and it was not a little—could no longer avail to keep back the tears that filled her eyes. She let fall her face upon her hands with a little choking sob.

"If it *be* money which you are proffering," pursued Clement, in the same constrained tone, "I am able to assure you that I do not need your assistance. But I am grateful to you for your kind intention."

"You are cruel," she sobbed out—"you are very cruel. You are resenting some fancied slight, or avenging a wound innocently inflicted long ago. God knows I came here to-day in all singleness of purpose; filled with respect for you. I know—I well know, how you have borne unmerited misfortune, and with the deepest sympathy and compassion; such compassion as a woman may feel for a friend whom she honours, or a dear brother. Any thought of hurting you—of—of what your words and tone seem to attribute to me, was as impossible to me, as I once believed you would have known that it must be. You said once, that come what might, you would be a true friend to me and mine if ever we needed your help. I had hoped that our next meeting would have been, at least, kindly; at least, free from bitterness or anger, and now—now——"

Once more sobs choked her utterance, and she hid her face.

"Mabel, Mabel," he cried, seizing her hand almost roughly, "you drive me mad. You force me to say what I had never thought to utter more. When you speak of friendship and sympathy, you speak words that sound like an empty mockery in my ears. Coming from others they might be dear and precious, from *you* they are utterly valueless to me."

She drew back, trembling from head to foot, and looked at him.

"What have I done—how have I so fallen in your esteem that you should dare to say so?"

"Mabel, you *will* not understand me. What I desire, what my soul thirsts for, is not your friendship, not your compassion, but your love! I know it is all vain and wild. I know—I have long known, that there is no hope for me, and that if there were I should be a wretch to seek to bind you to the lot of a ruined man, who seems destined to meet sorrow and failure at every turn. But I love you, Mabel. I love you as I shall love no other woman to the last hour of my life!"

"I think, my dear child, that we must be going. Penelope is remaining up-stairs, and Mrs. Charlewood is really much more composed now, and—good gracious, Mr. Charlewood! Clement! I should scarcely have known you! Ah, anxiety tells upon one with astonishing rapidity, as I well know to my cost."

Mrs. Saxelby had softly entered the room, and stood opposite to Clement with a dismayed countenance.

"Why, Mabel," she resumed, turning to her daughter, "what is the matter? You have been crying!"

"I have distressed Miss Earnshaw by the recital of my miseries," said Clement, sadly.

"Oh, but I hope they will soon be at an end, my dear Mr. Charlewood. It is impossible to suppose—as I have been endeavouring to impress on your mother—that Walter's absence can endure much longer. You will hear from him, or of him—most probably from him, I should say—in a day or two, I have no doubt."

Mrs. Saxelby had no reason in the world for making this confident assertion, but she conceived she was doing her duty in making it. It was her idea of consolation.

When Mabel and her mother were on their way home in the cab together, Mrs. Saxelby observed, in a plaintive voice, "I am grieved that you should have been moved so much, my darling, but it is in truth a sad household to visit; most depressing."

Mabel, strange to say, did not appear to be altogether depressed. There was a dreamy light in her eyes, and a bright flush on her usually pale cheek.

"I feel for them with all my heart, mamma," she said.

"No doubt you do, love. But the hardest part fell on *me*. I'm glad it did. I don't complain. To have passed the half hour I passed

at that poor woman's bedside would have quite unfitted you for your duties this evening. Such a pitifully weak condition of mind I never saw. And the worst is, Mabel, that there is no hope for her."

"No hope, mamma? How do you mean?"

"I have a firm presentiment—an instinct—a conviction almost—that Walter has drowned himself!"

"Oh, mamma! For Heaven's sake——"

"My pet, it is very shocking; but I cannot help the feeling. You know it is whispered that poor Mr. Charlewood, the father—Well, and that sort of thing frequently runs in families."

When they reached their home, Betty informed her young mistress that a person had been there asking for her, and that on being told she was from home, but would return to dinner, had said that he would call again. "He wouldn't leave no message nor nothing," said Betty.

"What sort of person was he, Betty? Any one whom you know?"

"Well, I can't hardly say for sure, miss. He was a strange-looking old fellow as ever I clapped eyes on. But somehow I think he was gentle bred, too. And as for seeing of him, why cook and me, we have see'd him once or twice, or oftener, maybe, walking about the lanes close by, with his dog. And I believe it must have been him as brought the little girl here that day, miss; for the instant after I'd let her in at the garden gate, I heard the dog a barking, and next minute I see the beast tearing down the lane full tilt."

Mabel hardly seemed to listen to Betty's voluble speech. There was a tumult within her breast that deadened her senses to outward things. She shut herself in her own room and leaned her throbbing head upon her hands. For a long time she could not think. She could not even remember clearly. Only one sentence kept ringing in her ears: "I love you, Mabel. I love you as I shall love no other woman to the last hour of my life."

"Can it be?" she murmured with lips that scarcely parted to let the words pass them.

"Ah! can it ever be?"

Beatrice had never been so brilliant, so vivacious, so charming, as on that evening. The Thespian Theatre vibrated to peal on peal of thunderous plaudits.

"By George," cried Mr. Alaric Allen, contemplating Mabel admiringly from the wing, "what an actress that girl is! She improves night after night. Such nerve, such spirit, such—such *go*! Bravo, bravissimo, Miss M. A. Bell! The town owes me something for having discovered you. And I'll venture to predict that you have the greatest career before you of any actress that has come out in my day!"

CHAPTER V. A RAY OF LIGHT.

MABEL's anonymous visitor returned the following morning to Desmond Lodge, accompanied by his dog; and she was surprised and

pleased to recognise Jerry Shaw and the faithful Lingo.

"He knows me! I do believe he knows me!" she cried, patting the dog's rough head.

"Knows ye! Is it *knows* ye, Miss Bell? Upon my word, you must suppose us to have uncommonly short memories if we'd have forgotten ye in this time!"

"But," said Mabel, apologetically, "I have not seen Lingo since Kilclare."

"What matter? Don't I know ye again? Though, indeed, we have both of us seen you since then, although you may not have seen us. Many an evening I've watched you getting into your little carriage to go down to the theatre. Lingo was afraid you'd be detecting us some time; but you didn't."

"What, Mr. Shaw, you have been so long in London, and never came to see an old friend? That was not kind. I look upon myself as a pupil of yours, do you know?"

"My dear Miss Bell," rejoined the old man, drawing himself up and speaking with some dignity, "you are a very sweet young lady, and a kind, and a generous; but my experience of life has taught me that even very sweet and amiable young ladies may be unwilling to claim acquaintance, in their prosperity, with any shabby poor devil with whom chance has made them acquainted under other circumstances. Now, I don't say that's your case," he added, seeing that she was about to interrupt him; "on the contrary, I am sure, quite sure, from your reception of me to-day, that it is not; but, now, looking at the thing from a common-sense point of view, why would I have intruded on ye? Would it have done me any good, or given you any pleasure? Not the least. It is so long since I have been used to the society of my fellow-creatures, that I have ended by being unfit for it. Time was, indeed, when I might have been no disgrace to your drawing-room; but that's all over. Lingo and I jog on together; and let me tell you that it has seldom been my lot to be in better company than Lingo's!"

"I am very glad to see you and him."

"But you're wondering why, after keeping away so long, I've made up my mind to come and bore you at last. Aha? Well, this is the state of the case, as briefly as I can put it. You're fond of little Corda Trescott, and have been kind to her. She worships you. The child is ill and weak and fading. I've reason to suspect that she has something preying on her mind which is undermining her health just as a canker eats up a poor little half-blown rosebud. I try to talk to her and win her confidence, but my crabbed old fingers are too harsh and rough to play upon such a delicate instrument as Corda's heart. There needs a woman's touch to bring the full music from those strings. In short, I—I've suffered myself (like an old fool as I am) to grow so fond of the little white slip of a thing, that I am made miserable by the sight of her sad sweet face looking so wistfully at me day after day; and I resolved to come to

you and ask you to spare an hour—only one hour now and then—to go and see the poor darling. She is not happy in her home, Miss Bell, as I dare say you know as well as I do; and the sight of your kind face would be a better cordial to her than all the wine."

Jerry finished his speech behind his blue checked pocket-handkerchief, and then gave an unusually prolonged and defiant sniff, as though to explain the gesture.

"The dear child! Poor, gentle, pretty little Corda! Thank you a thousand times, Mr. Shaw, for coming to me! I reproach myself for not having inquired for her before now. I will go to her this very day; this very hour. Will you accompany me?"

Jerry gladly consented, and they set off together.

"It's a great deal to ask of ye," muttered Jerry, as they walked down Highgate-hill side by side. "And it's too far for ye to walk, I'm afraid. Over the water on the Surrey side of Blackfriars-bridge."

"Not at all too far for me, Mr. Shaw. But it is a question of time, is it not? The sooner I reach Corda, the longer I shall be able to stay with her, so I think we will take a cab, if you have no objection."

"Does Corda know that you were coming to me?" asked Mabel, presently, when they were seated in the vehicle.

"No. I didn't like to run the risk of disappointing her."

"The doubt did me a little injustice, Mr. Shaw."

"It did you a great injustice. I'm ashamed of it now."

"And tell me, is it likely that—Mr. Shaw, I will speak frankly to you. I do not wish to meet Mr. Alfred Trescott; and I should be glad to hear that it is probable he will not be at home now."

"I think I may say you will certainly not meet him, Miss Bell. He is very seldom at home at all. As for his sister, he takes no more heed of *her*, the darling, than if she were made of wood. Just a careless kiss, or a word now and then, when he happens to think of it. Ah, he's—I'd rather not say in your presence what he is. But the little girl's affection for him is the most pathetic thing I ever saw in my life."

They reached Mr. Trescott's lodgings, and Jerry Shaw went in first to prepare Corda for the visit, while Mabel waited in the cab. Very shortly the old man reappeared, and beckoned her to enter the house. Corda was sitting on a low chair near the window to have the light upon some needlework she held in her hand. Her head was bent down, and the rich curls of her bright hair half concealed her face. At Mabel's footsteps she jumped up, and ran to her, holding out her arms. In the first moment, Mabel thought her looking not so ill as old Jerry had represented. Her cheeks had a red glow, her eyes a liquid brightness. But she was so weak that she tottered as she crossed

the room, and she was thin almost to emaciation. "So good, so good of you to come," she whispered, laying her cheek against Mabel's shoulder.

"It was Mr. Shaw who brought me, Corda."

"He's always good. How many good people there are! I wish—do you think *everybody* will be good, some day, Miss Mabel?"

"It is to be desired, dear," Mabel answered, smilingly, but Corda's face was very grave.

"I sometimes hope they will. Everybody, everybody good! That will be in heaven, won't it?"

"Yes, darling."

"And don't you think," pursued the child, sinking her voice to a whisper, "that the good people in heaven will be let to help to make those on earth better? Oh, I hope they may! I do hope it!"

Jerry Shaw, standing behind Corda, made Mabel a sign unseen by the former; and Mabel gently led the child away to other topics. It was not long before she was laughing gleefully at some anecdote about Dooley. "And do you know who is in London, Corda? My cousin Jack, from Dublin! Mr. Walton, as you call him."

Corda was full of interest directly, and asked a hundred questions about her kind friends in Ireland. "I have written to them," said she. "You must not think I was ungrateful. I did write to Mrs. Walton, and to Madame Bensa too. And they answered me. But I have not written lately. I have felt so tired."

Mr. Shaw had professed that he had an errand to perform in the neighbourhood, and had left Mabel alone with the child, promising to return shortly. As he left the room, he had given Mabel a beseeching glance, intended to recal to her mind what he had said respecting Corda. The little girl seemed cheerful enough now, holding Mabel's hand, and chatting almost gaily. "How long have you been ill, Corda dear?" asked Mabel.

"Oh, not very, very long, thank you." There was a shade of constraint over her manner all at once.

"And what made you so ill? Was it sudden?"

"Oh no, no. It was not that, indeed. I am quite sure I was not strong before."

"Not what, Corda? What are you alluding to, dear child?"

Corda grew more and more constrained and shy. "I mean, I should have been sure to be ill whatever happened. It was no one's fault."

"No one's fault! No, dear, I suppose not. But Mr. Shaw tells me, Corda, that he fancies you are not quite happy; that there is something distressing you. If it is so—if any trouble is preying on you—will you not confide it to me, Corda? Perhaps by consulting together, we might find a way to cure it. Won't you trust me, dear little Corda?"

The child withdrew her hand from Mabel's clasp and shrank away. "No, no, I can't, indeed. Don't ask me," she said, beseechingly. "There is nothing to tell."

"Nothing, Corda?"

"Nothing—or at least—I mustn't tell a story even to do good, must I?"

"Stories never do good, Corda. Be sure of that."

"No; I will speak the truth. But keeping a secret is different. Something did make me a little unhappy, but—I—I hope it is over now. And I cannot tell it to you, nor to any one. I have no right to do so. I found it out by chance." Then, as if fearing she had already said too much, she clasped her hands tightly together, and repeated, "No, no. I can't tell. I can't tell any one."

"Dear Corda, I will not urge you to do so," said Mabel, surprised and troubled by the child's agitation. "But you will promise me to let me help you if I can do so, will you not, Corda?"

Corda made an affirmative sign of the head, and slipped her small palm into Mabel's once more.

"You are weak and ill now, and sick people often have distressing fancies, you know, and see the dark side of things. When you get stronger, your trouble may seem less terrible."

Corda smiled faintly and shook her head. "When I get stronger," she repeated.

Jerry Shaw returned at this moment, and Mabel rose to go away. "I must leave you now, Corda," she said. "You know my time is not at my own command. But I will come again soon, and bring Dooley to see you. He often asks when 'Torda' is coming again to be wheeled in his barrow! Shall I give him your love?"

"Oh yes, please! And to Mrs. Saxeby, if—if I may send it."

"You may certainly, Corda. Now tell me the exact address of your lodgings. Mr. Shaw conveyed me hither, and I do not know the name of the street."

"I will write it down," said Corda, eagerly taking up a pen and a scrap of paper. "And—there—I have written one line to Dooley. Tell him it is a letter from me. He is always so delighted to get a letter. I remember, in Dublin, your cousin, Mr. Walton, used to send him little notes by the post on purpose to please him!"

"Thanks, Corda. It shall be duly delivered. And now, good-bye, dear child. I will come again soon. Meanwhile, be as cheerful as you can, and get very strong."

Corda clung to her friend in a parting embrace, but with habitual docility, and the habit so strangely familiar to so young a creature of resigning her own will, and, as it were, suppressing herself for the sake of others, she let her go without any effort to detain her, or a word of complaint.

"I think you are right, Mr. Shaw," said Mabel, as the old man was putting her into the cab which was in waiting. "The child's mind is ill at ease. But it may be, after all, no serious matter that is troubling her. Corda has a most singularly sensitive nature, and a

conscience painfully tender. She is surrounded, I fear, by many things that jar on her high sense of what is right and good."

"She made no special confidence to you, did she?"

"None. I invited her to do so as gently and as tenderly as I could. But I thought it would have been cruel and unwise to persist, when I saw how the attempt distressed her."

When Mabel returned home, she found her mother in as near an approach to an ill humour as she ever indulged in.

"My dear Mabel!" she exclaimed, reproachfully, "why did you go out in that manner? I have been so uneasy about you!"

"I am very sorry, dear mamma. You were not at hand, but I left word where I was gone to."

"Oh yes; it was not *that*. I did not fear that you were lost. But really, my child, you will wear yourself out. Running about from one sick house to another in this way! Everybody we know seems to be plunged into affliction. I'm sure it's dreadful. You might as well be a Sister of Mercy at once!"

Mrs. Saxelby pronounced the last words as though they conveyed something very shocking indeed.

Mabel made what excuse she could, and proceeded to give such a moving account of little Corda Trescott's state, that her mother was melted into sympathy at once. Then Mabel asked if her cousin had been to Desmond Lodge that morning, and whether there had been any news of Walter Charlewood. Jack had been, and would come again. Mr. McCulloch said there had been no tidings as yet. In the afternoon Jack appeared. Mabel hurried into the garden with an anxious questioning face.

"What news, Jack? Has anything been heard?"

"Nothing of Walter. It begins to look bad, I think. I should not wonder if he had gone off abroad. But—you remember what I told you of those anonymous letters? Well, McCulloch has just been telling me the crowning mystery of the whole affair. There has arrived at his office—it had been misdirected, and had gone astray—a letter (also anonymous), begging him in the most earnest manner not to give any heed to calumnies against Mr. Clement Charlewood. The writer evidently knows something of Charlewood's secret enemy, whoever he is. But it is the queerest composition. McCulloch showed it to me, and I could make nothing of it, except that the person who wrote really seemed anxious that no injustice should be done to Charlewood. And at the same time there seems an odd desire to screen his anonymous persecutor!"

At this instant Dooley came up to Jack's side with a face of great importance, holding a paper in his hand.

"I've got a letter," he cried, triumphantly.

"Go away now, dear boy," said his sister. "Cousin Jack will see it by-and-by."

"Won't 'oo 'ook at my letter?" persisted Dooley, holding it up.

Jack cast his eyes on the paper, and, with a loud exclamation, snatched it from the child and examined it closely.

"Who wrote this?" he asked.

"Corda—Corda Trescott," answered Mabel, gazing at him in bewilderment.

"Then," said Jack, emphatically, "as surely as you and I are standing here, Corda Trescott is one of McCulloch's anonymous correspondents!"

"Jack, what are you saying? It is impossible!"

"If Corda Trescott wrote this, Corda Trescott wrote the letter I saw this morning. I would swear to it. They are both written in pencil too, which renders it easier to identify the hand. Dooley, old fellow, you must lend me this letter of yours for a time. And if I'm not much mistaken, it will prove to be the most valuable bit of correspondence you ever got in your life!"

TWO PLAGUES.

It was Edgar Allen Poe, I think, who described with the horrible minuteness of an anatomical demonstrator the slow but never-ceasing growth of a fungus in his lungs. He called it "his fungus," as he would his hand or his heart, or any portion of himself. All the nutriment he took fattened his fungus, and if his veins ran bounding under the influence of good wine, the fungus throbbed in unison with his pulse. Daily and hourly the victim knew that his enemy was growing larger and more solid; he felt that this animal within an animal would at last occupy and choke the passages of the life-breath, and he waited with the resignation of despair for the end. The perusal of Edgar Poe's paper made me miserably nervous for a month. I fancied, and then believed, that I also carried within myself my inevitable destroyer. I had undoubtedly a choking feeling when I dined out, and supposed it was "my" fungus. A course of salmon-fishing and a few dozen of sound claret—not the chancellor's—banished the delusion, and to-day I would be a comparatively happy man were I not plagued by a nephew.

My nephew's name is Mark, and he has "walked the London hospitals" for two years. He will persist in unfolding to me some of the theories he has heard or invented. I suppose he is anxious to prove that he attends diligently at lectures, &c. There is nothing to ruffle one's equanimity in supposing with him that life is but electricity after all, and that we are moved to liking or disliking by positive or negative currents passing between two souls. He did agitate my curate not a little by that theory which he lately broached regarding contagion. All kinds of epidemic disease, he insisted, are propagated by minute corpuscles enclosed in "spore cists" floating in the air, but invisible to the eye. My curate is blessed with a numerous young family, and was not altogether comfortable

when visiting the sick to feel he was inhaling, with every breath, myriads of invisible fever-cists or microscopic germs of cholera morbus.

But latterly Mark has seriously discomposed myself, the rector of the parish, and therefore supposed to be fearless of contagion. He has endeavoured to persuade me that a living man's inside may become a hotbed for the growth of innumerable prolific mushrooms. He is, I know, a most affectionate creature, but he alarms me. If he resembles the generality of surgical students, they must be unpleasant companions occasionally in quiet domestic circles. I do not wish to offend or condemn a class, but within six days he nearly killed my housekeeper. She found "a preparation" in his bedroom, and meddled with it "to set the place to rights," and has been scrubbing her hands with freestone and brickbat ever since. She eats her meat in gloves, lest she should swallow some of those minute "sacs" or "cists" he spoke of, and find herself a cannibal. To instruct and enlighten me, I suppose, he arranged on our breakfast-table, close to the ham, what I, being short-sighted, mistook for well-worn dice, and would be happy now to think they were; but these were the bones of the toes from some exhumed anatomy. I am a lonely old bachelor, but I prefer ever since that he should breakfast and demonstrate by himself. No one would like the young gentleman who helps the sally-lun or beefsteak to have a human thigh-bone in his coat-pocket, or a "beautiful" specimen of dried muscular fibre in his note-book. I must admit that he cleared my garden completely of plunderers from the village since he placed real skulls as ornaments upon the gate piers, and told the awestruck children at Sunday school that the headless skeletons walked with rattling ribs in the fruit garden every night. He terrifies the house and kitchen maid with his awful experiences in the dissecting line. They will listen to him while he whiffs his pipe before the glowing range. A half-suppressed shriek tells me that he has got to that effective story concerning the young lady with golden hair—a lock of which he shows—whose leg he cut off before he found she was alive, and had been buried in a trance. Or of that poor gentleman whom the "sack-'em-ups" found turned in his coffin with flesh torn to ribbons by frantic efforts to escape. Since he has come down "to enjoy his holiday," I observe that the maids all sleep together in one room, and I suspect they bribe the stable-boy heavily, to sleep on a "shake-down" upon the lobby near them. But they will listen to him nevertheless, until their lips are white with terror.

My nephew is now studying the agreeable subjects of cholera and consumption, and, as I said, he seriously discomposed me for a time. "Cholera," he says dogmatically, "is mushrooms." "Mushrooms or fungi, sir, growing in your body." They are diminutive resemblances of Edgar Poe's fungus, I suppose. I do not set up to be a scientific man, and, however interesting the theory may be, it is not agreeable to

think that the entire interior of a man's mortal coil should be matted with poisonous fungi. The idea did throw me off my equilibrium, and I grew wrathful. But I was wrong: he proved himself a diligent student, and, handing me the bulky volume recently issued by Dr. Simon, the medical officer of the Privy Council, he soon convinced me that he had not exaggerated in the least.

In the autumn of 1849, Dr. Cowdell, of Dorchester, established by theory that cholera must depend upon a microscopical fungus, absorbed through the lungs into the blood. Dr. Budd, of Bristol, in a letter to the Times (September 29), added that "he had found peculiar microscopic objects, which seem to be of the fungus tribe, in great numbers in almost every specimen of drinking water which he was enabled to obtain from cholera districts. Thus the so-called discoveries of Thomé, Klob, and Hallier, had been anticipated in substance in England by nearly twenty years. But though cholera has revisited England, the theories set forth by Cowdell and Budd do not appear to have been revived in this country. It remained for M. Hallier to establish, by patient investigation, often attended with no small degree of peril, results which must be admitted to have a most important bearing upon the health of every civilised community.

M. Hallier supposes that the cholera fungus is a plant imported from Asia, and properly a parasite which grows upon unhealthy rice plants. So close did the connexion between cholera and a diseased condition of the rice plant appear to English physicians in India, that they named cholera "rice disease" (*morbus oryzeus*). Hallier undertook a series of experiments to decide, as far as possible, the eastern origin of these fungi. He made certain experiments with rice, which proved that, as the fungus destroys the epidermis of the rice-plant, so it eats away the intestinal epithelium, or inside skin, in man. The interior of a cholera patient teems with a vegetation of minute fungi joined end to end as links of a chain branching out and interlacing in every direction, until all the digestive organs are covered with a matted growth of filaments and spores propagating after their kind with astonishing rapidity. The high temperature of the digestive organs maintains the fungus plant in activity until it destroys the human soil on which it lives. M. Hallier, however, seasons his fearfully suggestive theories with some grains of comfort. A high temperature, as provided by the mean climate of India, and by the extreme summer climate of Europe, also furnishes the condition requisite for the development of the fungus *outside* the body. Thus in summer only in European latitudes can this fungus find in earth and fermenting matter the necessary temperature for its increase, and hence the disease cannot become indigenous to Europe, if only obedience be yielded to Nature's sanitary laws. As the result of numerous and laborious investigations, this fact is gained, that the local conditions of safety, not only from cholera, but

from all epidemics, are, first, that by appropriate structural works all the impurities incidental to towns and villages with large populations should be thoroughly removed; and, secondly, that the water supply shall be derived from such sources, and conveyed in such channels, that its contamination shall be impossible. For, if there be one fact in Hygiene more certainly established than another, it is this, that epidemic cholera has always been found in connexion with a polluted condition of water. The spore-cists are so light and minute, and water is so delicate and susceptible an element, that both readily combine, and a gust of wind passing through an infected district may bear with it the poison germs to the purest fountains.

But turning over the many pages of the medical officer's report upon preventable diseases, I lit upon the words, "The drying of soil, which has in most cases accompanied the laying of main sewers in improved towns, has led to the diminution, more or less considerable, of phthisis." What an argument for the immediate and thorough application of sanitary rules lies in this brief sentence! Few there are who have not seen with indescribable pain the young cheek glowing with unearthly beauty, the eye sparkling with unnatural brilliancy, the pure white skin covered by azure veins, which told too faithfully that Decay had marked the charmer for his own! Life gleaming brightly, like tropical flowers nourished by malaria, fading away before the noon! Of all the dread legion of diseases, the most fatal bane of our English climate is consumption—the insidious destroyer which clothes with ethereal loveliness its victim for the last sacrifice. Against it we mourn the inability of the healing art, and can only with bitter sadness send our patient to seek a brief respite and a grave on sunnier shores. Here at last, in this Report, on the authority of the medical officer of the Privy Council, the fact is recorded that even consumption may be banished from our island, and our graveyards may no longer yawn to receive the young and beautiful blighted by that plague. The fact was incidentally discovered. The ominous figures which record the mortality in English towns were all placed in order before the medical officer. Glancing down the columns which give the death-rates for many years, he saw that in cities where the authorities had warred against disease with the aid of the navy, the mason, and the drainage-pipe, there the deadly power of consumption had been broken down. The reduction of the fatality of phthisis, where these have been at work, is too general and uniform to be accidental.

Dr. Buchanan gives a list of fifteen towns in which sanitary works have been well executed, and here are the results. In Salisbury, the reduction in the mortality of phthisis is now forty-nine per cent on the previous rate; in Ely, forty-seven; in Rugby, forty-three; in Banbury, forty-one; in Worthing, thirty-six; in Macclesfield, thirty-one; in Leicester, thirty-two; in Newport, thirty-two; in Cheltenham,

twenty-six; in Bristol, twenty-two; in Dover, twenty; in Warwick, nineteen; in Croydon, seventeen; in Cardiff, seventeen; in Merthyr, eleven. In all these towns the diminution in this most pitiable of all diseases is connected with, and subsequent to, the construction of sanitary works; in towns where authorities are apathetic or content with the old ways, consumption has become intensified in virulence. Dr. Buchanan, in surveying the mortality tables, notices the striking fact "that, in some of the towns, the diminished fatality of phthisis is by far the largest amendment, if not the only one, which has taken place in the local health;" a result fairly explained by the fact that "works of sewerage, by which the drying of soil is effected, must always, of necessity, precede, and do precede, by years, the accomplishment of house-drainage, cesspools, &c., on which the cessation of other diseases is dependent."

I now discover that my nephew had some wisdom in his folly. He has gained me over; and, though the process of conversion was somewhat trying, it is complete. He will accompany me, to-day, in a survey of my parish, and it will go hard with me if I do not persuade my people to clear away those nursing-beds of fever, cholera, and consumption, which make it one of the most unhealthy districts in England.

"RUSSIAN PAPERS, PLEASE COPY."

THERE is no country in which one feels so helpless as in Russia, though every one is inclined to help you. Unless you get a valet-de-place who speaks French or English, or an interpreter of some kind, you are at a complete loss, and distances being very great in the towns, you may wander for hours without finding the place you seek. But if you do get an intelligent interpreter, and an intelligent *isvostchik*, or driver, which you can manage by paying well, there is the danger of your pay putting something in their mouths which steals away their brains.

One day I was driving through Moscow with a friend, and our valet-de-place, who spoke English, having learnt it as a prisoner in the Crimea, got drunker and drunker at every place we stopped at, in a manner visible to the naked eye. "You beast," said my friend, who was somewhat fiery, "you're drunk." "No, sir," answered the Russian, with a good-humoured stare, "not drunk yet; not very drunk. Shall be later, when you pay me." In a weak moment we got rid of this linguist, and trusted ourselves to the mercy of our driver. We were sufficiently masters of the language to desire him to take us to an address phonetically written for us. We trusted to be forwarded on from stage to stage of our city pilgrimages by those on whom we called, who generally spoke French. So we went to call on Monsieur Douboff, a gentleman to whom we carried letters.

During the drive, we arrived at the conclusion that our driver was also drunk, as evidenced, not from carelessness, but from over-care in driving. In Russia, the laws on hackney drivers are very strict, and the penalties on accidents very severe. Droschky-drivers are therefore educated to a normal state of intoxication, during which they ply their trade with much more accuracy than when in their exceptional moods of sobriety. Our driver was very drunk, and we were perfectly secure against danger.

On arriving at M. Douboff's house, we learnt from his secretary that he was in the country, at a place called Petroffski Park, a summer suburb of Moscow. It was only about five in the afternoon, so we determined to continue our researches. We accordingly requested the secretary to explain to our coachman the whereabouts of M. Douboff's house.

On reaching the court-yard, we found the carriage where we had left it; but the driver, while holding the reins, was kneeling with his face on the box, his back naturally to the horse, fast asleep.

We poked him with our sticks, shouted in his ears, but all in vain. At last a poke more violent than the others aroused him. He got up, seated himself on the box, stared at us for a moment, then fell forward, his head on the splashboard—still holding the reins mechanically, but according to the rules of his art. Once again we continued the poking process, until he really seemed alive, not only to the necessity of keeping awake, but of driving to the place indicated to him. We expressed ourselves doubtful as to the result, but our friend's secretary reassured us by telling us that, drunk or sober, these men invariably found their way.

We started at a good pace, and as we knew the way to Petroffski Park, and found we were going in a right direction, we resigned ourselves confidently to our guide. At length, the fast-trotting horses brought us to a small town of scattered villas, each surrounded, very much as in England, with a garden, and a sweep enclosed by a railing and gateway. Up one of these sweeps, of which the gateway was open, we drove, but no Monsieur Douboff. Next door, nothing of the kind. The driver, in tones that imitated sobriety, inquired if the inhabitant's knew where Monsieur Douboff resided. Whether they did or not I cannot tell, but we were driven to some other house, and then to a fourth and fifth, always finding the gate open. At last we were getting tired; it was beginning to be dark, and we determined that if the next inquiry were unsuccessful, we would return to Moscow. Scarcely had we formed this resolution when we arrived at the first gateway which we found closed. The driver made signs of satisfaction, repeating the words, "Dom Douboff." We therefore alighted in good faith, opened the gate, and walked up to the house, some few yards distant. We knocked and rang some time, meanwhile hearing the sound of

the wheels of our carriage as it turned round. After some minutes, a servant appeared.

"Monsieur Douboff?" we asked.

"Non," answered the servant, who spoke a little French.

"Where does he live?"

"Sais pas," was the rejoinder.

We returned to the gate just in time to see the last of our carriage, which was galloping at the top of its speed to Moscow.

It is useless to relate the wrathful expressions of my comrade. Although he had on the whole enjoyed his Russian trip, he condemned Russia and its whole population to be drawn by rapid droschkies to a climate anything but northerly.

"We must go to the right," I said.

"No—to the left," he replied.

So, though I knew I was in the right, we went the other way.

Then my friend abused me.

"It's all your fault, coming this wild-geese chase. If we had only brought the valet-de-place, we shouldn't have been four miles from home, without a carriage, in a country we don't know, and where we can't speak a word of the language."

Now it was he who had dismissed the valet-de-place, as the reader knows; and if this story had only begun a little sooner, it would have shown that the proposal to visit M. Douboff originated in the wish of my friend to obtain some sketches from that well-known source.

However, a soft answer, or no answer at all, turneth away wrath; so, strong in my position, I trudged by his side in silence, knowing that we were lengthening the distance from the town.

At length, turning a corner, we saw a gentleman and two ladies walking, the former smoking, and all evidently going home for the evening.

"Here are some natives," said my friend, who does not trust his French; "ask them the road."

The gentleman lifted his hat, and with an admirable accent asked in English, "Can I be of service to you, gentlemen?"

"You are too kind. We came here to find Monsieur Douboff. We have not found him, and our coachman has disappeared with the carriage. Could you tell us where Monsieur Douboff lives, or any place where we could obtain a droschky?"

"I do not think Monsieur Douboff lives here, but I will ask," answered the stranger politely; and turning up a corner, he left us with his two ladies.

"It is a long time that you are in Russia?" said one of them, frankly, but with more of a foreign accent than the gentleman.

"No, only a few days," answered my friend; and he could not resist adding, "how well you speak English!"

"No, we do not," was the reply; "but my brother, he speak it very well. He live three years in England, and travel in America."

"I have inquired at every likely place,"

broke in the brother, as he came back, "but in vain. There is no Dom Douboff in this neighbourhood."

"Oh," groaned my friend, "what are we to do?"

"Could you," I asked of the Russian gentleman, "indicate any place where we might find a droschky? We do not know our road, and we cannot ask it."

"There are no droschkies nearer than Moscow."

"Oh!" groaned my friend again, and in such a tone of misery that no one could resist a smile.

"Well, gentlemen, forgive me if I make a proposition; but as you are quite astray, will you come and drink tea at my house? I am sure my mother will be delighted to see you."

"Certainly she will," chorused the young ladies.

"Meanwhile," he continued, "I dare say I can find a messenger to go to Moscow to fetch you a carriage, unless he can find a stray droschky nearer."

The invitation was so frankly given, that we overcame our fear of intrusion, and accompanied forthwith our new friends.

The house was a very commodious one, like all the better class of Russian houses, though there was a good deal more order than is usually the case. The upper servant was a Frenchman, and he had evidently drilled his subalterns out of the shrinking, happy-go-lucky style of attendance so characteristic of the serfdom out of which they had scarcely been emancipated. The room on the ground floor was full of the knick-knacks and works of art which people can only collect by travelling—quaint bits of majolica, little pictures, with painted frames, copied from Giotto or Bento Angelico, Roman and Venetian photographs, white marble statuettes, green marble vases, and some book slides of Spa and Tonbridge ware. A samovar boiled, according to Russian custom, in the verandah; and the garden beyond was trimly kept. The mother, to whom we were introduced, had all the charm of the travelled Russian grande dame. We found in the course of conversation that her husband had occupied several posts of importance in the Russian diplomacy, and she had many anecdotes of Prince Talleyrand, Pozzo di Borgo, Lords Castlereagh and Clancarty, and others of that group of celebrities, who lived before the telegraph had given the death-blow to diplomatic eminence. And the whole family conversed with that freshness, ease, and dignity, which are so eminently combined in Russian as in Irish women of the highest order. There was a feeling of home about the whole thing that resembled old acquaintance and friendship. The young ladies sang us songs in Russian, the ditties wild and gay which you hear from the gipsies, national melodies, and well-remembered airs from Italy and France. Nothing could make me better pleased with Russia than the ease and cheeriness of this evening; so the droschky, which we now found, had to wait for us a long time.

We had early presented our hosts with our

cards. In a strange country, let me advise the traveller to carry with him a good supply of cards and photographs. For a small civility, a card is always much appreciated, while a photograph is a sufficient recompense even for a service. In Russia the photographs are very good. There is something in the air which makes them flattering. Our hosts had bestowed them liberally on us—a likeness of our host, of his mother, four of his sisters in different attitudes, besides groups and vignettes. He came for my friend's.

"You will, I am sure, gratify us by giving us yours?" said our host; and the ladies put in a claim also for their albums.

Of course we desired nothing better, but, alas! we had none with us. Previously to leaving St. Petersburg, they had been taken by Mr. Carrick, a Scotch photographer who resides there, and they were to be ready against our return.

"But, if you will allow us, we will send them," I said. "We return to St. Petersburg to-morrow."

"So soon?" said they all, in a tone which flattered us.

"So soon," we replied, with sentiment; "alas! yes."

"But you do not know our names," said one of the ladies. "I had better write them down clearly, with our address; and as you have so many of our portraits, I will make them up into a packet, with our names, so that you shall neither forget us nor your promise."

We could only reiterate our thanks, our promise, and our desire to be useful in England. The photographs were duly packed up with the address and name of our kind hosts, the latter being utterly unpronounceable and impossible of acquirement under some weeks of study. My friend, who had a breast-pocket, deposited the packet safely therein.

So we drove off to Billot's Hotel at Moscow, jubilant with our pleasant evening. The next morning we left for St. Petersburg. The journey is twenty-four hours. You are given large quadrangular carriages, with sofas all round, and tables in the midst. You play at whist during the day. At night you sleep. At the stations you eat capercazie and blackcock. You drink tea, if you like, or if you prefer anything stronger, Clicquot, Roederer provides you with champagne, and Château Yquem stands ready in purity. Late in the evening we had supper. At the next station we had tea. At the next a glass of kummel; and then we wound up our watches, and curled up on our sofas for the night.

As my doze was sinking into sleep, I was aroused by the vision of my friend flitting about anxiously, as though in search of something.

At last he woke me.

"You haven't seen my great-coat?"

"Your great-coat? No."

"Then, by Jove! I've lost it, with my pocket-book containing 100*l.* circular notes, and our friends' photographs and cards."

And sure enough it was lost, and never found again. We telegraphed, we wrote, but in vain. We described our friends to every one we met, in hopes of ascertaining their names, but equally without result; and here for two years we have been labouring under the certainty of being considered the most ungrateful, ill-bred, and treacherous guests that ever inveigled hospitality under the guise of respectable foreigners. Non Angli, sed diaboli. They know our names, and we don't know theirs; and if we receive our deserts, our cards must now be pilloried with opprobrious epithets on the walls of that cheery drawing-room in Petroffski Park.

Our only hope is that these lines may penetrate to Russia, where the press is much more free than it was. So Russian papers, please copy; and friends in Moscow, accept of this intimation.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

LONDON STREET RIOTS IN THE LAST CENTURY.

FROM 1700 to 1780 street riots seem to have been of almost annual occurrence in London, and to have been seldom quelled without bloodshed.

To begin with 1715. In that year the Whig and Tory footmen had several furious battles while waiting for their masters outside the House of Commons. At last the Tory Jeameses gained the day, elected a speaker, carried him three times round Westminster Hall, and then adjourned to an alehouse to dine and propose Tory toasts.

This same year several hundred Whig citizens celebrated the accession of George the First by burning an effigy of the Pretender, dressed in mourning, before the door of the Roebuck Tavern, in Cheapside. On the anniversary of the king's coronation they assembled again, wearing white and orange cockades, carrying links, and burnt before Bow Church effigies of the Pope, the Pretender, the Earl of Mar, the Duke of Ormond, and Lord Bolingbroke. On November 17th there was another riot, the Whigs seizing on some Jacobite effigies of George the First, King William, Marlborough, Newcastle, and Dr. Burnet, which the Tories were about to carry in procession. This maddened the Jacobites, who assembled, shouting "High Church and Ormond," and attempted to tear down the Roebuck Tavern. The Whigs replied with a volley which killed two of the assailants and wounded others. The Jacobites then fled ingloriously.

In 1716, there were more Jacobite riots at the mug-houses. A tavern in Salisbury-court was attacked by the Tories, and their leader, a Bridewell apprentice, was shot dead by the landlord. Five of the rioters were hung for this. The Roebuck loyalists retorted later in the year by an enormous bonfire in Cheapside, drinking healths, and sounding trumpets in the open street. They then got up a procession of a thousand links, and men representing High-

land prisoners, and protected by soldiers, burnt a quantity of obnoxious effigies at Charing-cross.

In 1717, there were several pitched battles between the butchers and the footmen of St. James's. The "Bridewell boys" joined the footmen, and the men of Westminster, Clare, and Bloomsbury markets helped the butchers. The same year the Roebuck Whigs attacked the Jacobites, and laid siege to Newgate-market. In 1718 the "Bridewell boys" beat the loyalists, and the civil power at last wisely put a stop to the irritating processions of the Whigs.

On the 23rd of July, 1723 (George the First), a party of volunteer militia gentlemen of Captain Saunders's company were invited by their officer, after their usual Tuesday's muster in the Artillery Ground, to sup with him at the Crown Tavern, near Cripplegate, a tavern kept by a Mr. Adams, major of the White Regiment, and therefore naturally regarded by them in those troublesome Jacobite times not merely as an obliging host but as a comrade in arms. The militiamen had eaten and drunk of the fattest and the best, when all at once a pale-faced man ran into the room and informed the guests that "Williams's mob" (an election was then raging) was out, and that they were pulling down the house of Mr. Jones, an apothecary who lived a door or two off. Mr. Carter, a prudent officer who was present, at once rose and gave the mot d'ordre:

"Let them alone; I hope that not a man here will stir."

It grew quieter then; but between six and seven the distant murmurs became more threatening, the shouts more stormy, the clatter of clubs more menacing and nearer. About twenty men with large cudgels began to surround Mr. Jones's door, and hiss, halloo, and rattle their sticks. They then came to the Crown Tavern and Crown Coffee-house, and marched backwards and forwards defiantly. The cries were: "Down with the Rump!—No King George!—Lockwood and Williams for ever!—High Church and Williams!" The mob continued to gather as the waters of an inundation roar and roll on to destroy. Ill-favoured faces were surging up from every alley as gutters swell in heavy rain. Thieves and rogues hurried out from their lairs and dens. Rascaldom was armed and dangerous. The Jacobites, maddened by election insults and threats, were surging over with rage and sedition. They were sick of King George and his Germans. A presentiment of the rising of 'forty-five was stirring within them. A few thoughtful men were goading on the brute herd to violence, the scum of a great city was eager for blood, riot, and mischief. The hissing, many-armed, many-tongued monster had awoke from its sleep, and was eager for its food. By about eight o'clock the human avalanche had rolled into a vast moving mountain. The people began to light great wavering bonfires on both sides of Cripplegate. When the fire roared fiercer, they began to surround the Crown Tavern, and to shout:

"Down with the house!"

In the mean time, the trained-band soldiers went on sipping unasily their punch and wine, some alarmed, some eager to get home unseen, but many longing to snatch up their firelocks, draw their swords, and have at the irritating mob. Porters, drawers, barmen, ostlers, came up at different times, reporting progress, describing what house had been last wrecked, and which way the torrent seemed tending. Each messenger appeared more frightened than the last. About eleven, Major Adams, the landlord, himself came up, and told them that the mob were flinging firebrands and stones into the house.

This roused the trained-band captains, and, headed by an officer named Lamb, they drew their swords, and went down-stairs to drive the mob out of the passages of the tavern. The rabble drew back at the first flash of the swords, but soon billowed back threateningly, armed with clubs, missiles, and firebrands. Captain Lamb, seeing the danger, snatched up a firelock and cried out that he would fire at the first man who offered to strike a blow. The mob fell back. Captain Lamb and his men then made a circuitous march round through Moor-gate, and on coming to Cripple-gate again, read the proclamation, guarded by two men with swords and two with muskets. The mob was very rebellious and violent, and kept shouting:

"No King George! No Hanoverian proclamation! No King George! Mr. Williams for ever!"

Loyal Captain Lamb, righteously indignant at these treasonable cries, pursued, with his drawn sword, one man, a smith, who was crying "No King George," but could not overtake him. On returning to the without side of Cripple-gate, Carter, a militiaman, laid hold of a rioter; but the fellow was rescued by Lant, the captain of the mob. Somebody then cried out:

"That is Lant, the captain of the mob; he has been leading them all night."

Carter seized Lant, and Captain Lamb came up, struggled with him, and cried, "Deliver your stick, or it will be the worse for you." It was then wrested from Lamb, and after a struggle he was dragged into the Crown Tavern, the mob all the time shouting:

"Down with them! Down with the house! Down with the Roebuck Tavern! Down with the Roebuck Coffee-house!" (the Roebuck mug-house, as we have seen, was a resort of Whig gentlemen, and very obnoxious to the Jacobites). "High church and Williams! The constable's a fool for reading the proclamation!" In the words of the disgusted Dogberry:

"There was never a mob so abusive to people who never gave the least provocation in word nor deed."

But the worst was, the mob did not rest satisfied with abuse, but they also broke the heads of worthy but "o'er parted" constables.

We can gather from Hogarth's election pictures what sort of thing a London mob was in the time of the first Georges. Rough sailors, tough swearing soldiers, savage Irish coal-

heavers, desperate costermongers, stalwart sedan-chair men, burly porters, all fellows with artificially bald heads, that presented irresistible invitations to the quarter-staff and the chair-man's pole. Communication was slow from one part of London to another; the constables were mere fussy superannuated old women, and the riot, unless the Guards came down and blazed at the crowd in time, generally continued till it burnt itself out, leaving a residuum of a dozen or two bruised, gashed, and bleeding men and half a dozen dead bodies. It was a rough age, and life was not valued then as it is now.

The sea was still rising. The mad cries of "Down with the Rump and King George!" continued up and down the street and on both sides of Cripple-gate. Passers-by were compelled to pull off the hats as the cudgel-men marched or danced round the bonfires, or rushed to break in Whig shutters or smash Whig lamps. Every moment some bleeding man was borne into the Crown Tavern. Now a Mr. Woodley, with a desperate cut to the bone on his forehead, then Major Adams's porter, and so on, till seven or eight men are injured. The militiamen charge again, shouting: "King George for ever!" and Captain Bray and Captain Lamb lead them on, waving their swords. They dashed up to a bonfire opposite the Castle Tavern. Captain Bray, conspicuous in his buff and scarlet, struck them away with his scabbard, and shouted:

"There shall be no bonfire."

But the people were obdurate: the moment the militia soldiers returned to their tavern, they gathered the still blazing billets, and remade the bonfire. This time the Whig soldiers returned in force; about a dozen of them appeared with muskets and bayonets, and the rest with swords. Suddenly one of the officers remembered that they all had left their watches out in the dining-room in their hurry, and returned to collect them. Then all together, the gentlemen in scarlet with swords, and the Grenadiers with sticks, rushed out to the conduit, where one of the bonfires still blazed, and a gun was discharged. But even the terrible cry, "Fire!" did not scare the mob this time, for their blood was up, and they advanced to meet the swordsmen and musketeers. The two angry seas met in the centre of the street. Down went the cudgels on Whig heads like flails on a thrashing-floor; bayonets thrust and parried across the central gutter; musket-butts swung savagely; swords probed furiously, till at last, step by step, the men in scarlet, leaving some of their number bleeding on the pavement, fell back to the Crown Tavern, and barricaded themselves until the constables gathered in force, and the mob sullenly dispersed.

In December, 1723, Lant, Ayres, Kite, and Ambler, four of the principal rioters, were tried at the Old Bailey, but all acquitted except the desperate Lant, who was found guilty of the misdemeanour, and fined thirty pounds, or, in default, three months' imprisonment.

In 1724, there was a riot at Tyburn at the

execution of Jack Sheppard. The mob, believing the surgeons were going to carry off the body, destroyed the hearse, beat the mutes, and bore the thief's body off to the Barleymow public-house in Long-acre. Discovering there that the rumour was only a trick of the surgeons, they broke into a riot, which was only quelled by detachments of the Guards from the Savoy.

In 1733, there was an excise-bill riot in London: the bill being deferred, the mob burnt effigies of the unpopular minister, and broke hundreds of windows. In 1734, a great tumult occurred in Suffolk-street, Charing-cross, where some foolish young Whig gentleman had, in ridicule of the death of King Charles, lit a bonfire before the door, and thrown into it a calf's head. An indignant Tory mob stormed the house, and completely wrecked it. The Guards at last suppressed the riot.

The next great disturbance in London was owing to the attempt in parliament to suppress the use of gin. The street cry was: "No Gin, no King!" Guards had to be posted at St. James's, Somerset House, and the Rolls, and horse militia were distributed as patrols in the parks and Covent Garden. This same year there were many desperate conflicts in Whitechapel between the English and Irish bricklayers. In 1758, there was a riot at Islington, at the funeral of an undertaker, pawnbroker, and publican of Moorgate, who had been detested by the populace for his extortions. In 1763, during the Covent Garden election, the Irish chairmen had a desperate battle with a party of soldiers and sailors. A challenge was offered by a chairman to fight the best sailor present; this ended in the defeat of the Irishman, who was instantly reinforced by his brethren, when a general attack commenced on the sailors with pokers, tongs, fenders, and other weapons from the household armoury; those, supported by a party of unarmed soldiers, drove their antagonists from the field, and immediately proceeded to demolish every "chair" they could find. These outrages continued till evening. By that time a general muster of chairmen had taken place. These, exasperated to madness, beat down men, women, and children, in their progress to the scene of action, where a dreadful conflict was only prevented by a party of soldiers from the Savoy, whose exertions accomplished the capture of some of the ringleaders; but not before a soldier and a sailor, and three other persons, had been dangerously wounded, and the King's Head alehouse almost demolished. The stalwart chairmen of the Georgian era are familiar to us through the pictures of Hogarth. The year ended with tumult, for in December a mob interfered to prevent the public burning of Number Forty-five of Wilkes's North Briton before the Royal Exchange. The people seized the fagots, and thrashed and pelted the aldermen and constables; they then marched to Temple-bar, and, in mockery of the obnoxious nobleman, Bute, burnt a large jack-boot at Temple-bar.

The February of the following year, 1764, produced a riot of a most singular kind. A man, having a claim for debt against a female servant of the ambassador for Morocco who resided in Panton-square, Haymarket, collected a mob, declaring that the woman was his wife, detained for unlawful purposes. The ambassador's windows were pelted with dirt and stones, and all the furniture destroyed. The ambassador and his retinue defended the first floor with drawn sabres, and were pelted with the legs of chairs, till a company of the Guards arrived and dispersed the irrational mob.

A few months later in the same year, 1764, the footmen of gentlemen attending Ranelagh hissed certain persons who had refused their servants vails. Not content with this protest, they proceeded to destroy the fences, break the coloured lamps, and pelt the company in the rotunda. Some constables were stationed at Ranelagh to preserve the peace, and two nights after the footmen's riot the constables themselves got quarrelsomely drunk, and fought in the midst of the fashionable promenaders.

In the year 1768, London was the scene of innumerable riots, and no young town on the banks of the Mississippi could have presented a more lamentable picture of inefficient police and lawless and determined mobs. On May 16th, 1768, a mob assembled round the King's Bench Prison, where their ugly idol, Wilkes, was then imprisoned, a report having been spread that the great demagogue was that day to be taken to the House of Commons. One of the mob, posting against the prison-wall some dogrel lines about Liberty being locked in with Wilkes, the constable took it down, and a riot ensued. Among the most conspicuous of those who flung stones at the magistrates was a man who wore two dirty red waistcoats, but no coat. Six Grenadiers were sent to apprehend him; but he fled among the cowsheds and tea-gardens of St. George's Fields. The soldiers, tracking him to a cowhouse, followed him in; but he escaped by a door, through which, unluckily, at the same moment entered a Mr. Allan, the son of a neighbouring farmer. One of the soldiers instantly shot him. The soldier's defence was that the musket had gone off by accident.

In this same year the journeymen tailors collected in vast numbers in Lincoln's Inn-fields to discuss their grievances. Sailors and coal-heavers proceeded to far more desperate measures to obtain higher wages, actually stopping outward-bound vessels, and disabling their sails and spars. Luckily for quieter men, the coal-heavers and sailors at last fell by the ears and fought like Montagues and Capulets, till the gutters of Wapping and Rotherhithe ran with blood. On one fatal night twenty of the combatants were killed, and seven soldiers and a sergeant lost their lives in a riot at Wapping.

About this time a brave, honest man, named John Green, living at the bottom of New Gravel-lane, Shadwell, was appointed deputy under Mr. William Russell, an inspector of the

celebrated Alderman Beckford under the new act of parliament for regulating coalheavers, who, before this, had been under the direction of Justice Hodgson. The coalheavers had struck work, and demanded higher wages from the coal-merchants, insisting upon eighteenpence per score. Mr. Russell established an office at Billingsgate to register coalheavers; but they refused to come, declaring they would obey no one but Justice Hodgson. Mr. Russell then wrote to the justice, who refused to give him an interview, but sent his clerk, who told Mr. Russell that if he did not close his office, his master would lead him a pretty dance to Westminster Hall, the new act being so vague that anybody might keep an office, and that as his master had all the best men, he would be sure to get all the business. Mr. Russell, vexed at this controversy, advertised that if no coal-heaver came by a certain day he should employ any able-bodied man who applied. Whereupon many strangers came, and were put in the gangs. Dunster, Justice Hodgson's clerk, then brought to his door no less than three or four hundred regular men, who threatened they would pull down his house, and would do for him. Green went to the Mansion House to acquaint the lord mayor of the danger he was in, and received for answer that he must be directed by some magistrate in his neighbourhood. On Saturday morning, the 16th of April, the coalheavers having put up some bills, a neighbour's servant pulled one down, upon which the coalheavers cried out that Green's maid had pulled down their bills, and made a riot. Green's narrative of this water-side battle is so graphic and so simple-hearted, that it cannot be condensed or improved:

"I saw," he said, "a great many people running from their different habitations, some with bludgeons, or broomsticks, and weapons of that sort; they did not collect themselves in a body, but were running to the head of New Gravel-lane; I believe about four or five hundred of them came within two hundred yards of my house; they went to Mr. Metcalf, a neighbour of mine, and threatened him; there was one of them that was a pretended friend of mine, that had promised, when he knew of anything against me, he would let me know; I sat up to guard my house, and I sent my wife and children out of the house; after that I prevailed upon my wife to stay in the house upon this man's intelligence; he came about twelve, and told me nothing was intended against me, that they had done their business they were about. I went to bed, and was asleep; I was awaked by my sister-in-law, calling 'Mr. Green, Mr. Green, for God's sake, we shall be murdered;' this was about one o'clock on the Sunday morning; I jumped out of bed, and ran into the next room, where my arms were; I took and levelled one, and said, 'You rascals, if you do not be gone, I will shoot you;' they were then driving at my doors and shutters; the noise was terrible, like a parcel of men working upon a ship's bottom, I could

compare it to nothing else; I fired among them; I believe I fired about fourteen times; and, when I had not anything ready to fire, I threw glass bottles upon them; they were at this about a quarter of an hour, when they all dispersed. Nothing happened after till Wednesday night, that was the 20th, about seven in the evening; then I saw a great many of these coalheavers assembling together, about three or four hundred yards from my house, going up Gravel-lane. I shut up, and told my wife to get out of the house as fast as she could with her children; accordingly she went away with the child that was asleep in the cradle. When the house was secured backwards and forwards, I went up-stairs; some stones had broke some windows there; I believe some of them had thrown stones and run away; I heard them call out '*Wilkes and Liberty*;' I saw the neighbours lighting up candles, for these people shall have no occasion at all to use me ill. I went to the window and begged of them to desist, and said, if they knew anything particular of me, I was willing to resolve anything they wanted to know; seeing I could not defend myself, I disguised myself, and put on an old watch-coat and a Dutch cap, and went down-stairs in order to get a magistrate to come and prevent my house from being pulled down; I had one Dunderdale, a shoemaker, that lodged in my house, he went down with me; when I came down to the back door, I heard them threaten they would have me and my life; I then found it impossible to get out of the house; I ran up-stairs then, fully determined to defend myself as long as I was able. I spoke to them again in the street from the window, and desired them to tell me what I had done; they called out in the street, 'they would have me and hang me over my sign-post;' others said 'they would broil and roast me,' and words to that effect; stones came up very fast. I then took a brace of pistols from the table, and fired among them, loaded with powder only; after that I kept firing away among them what arms I had loaded with bird and swan shot; they dispersed in the front then; I immediately ran backwards, they were heaving stones into the back chamber-windows; I fired from the back chamber-windows; after I had fired some few rounds backwards, they desisted from heaving stones into the back part of the house, but I did not find they had left the place. I was again attacked both in front and back part of the house; I fired among them sometimes from the front of my house, and sometimes from the rear; I imagined they would have broke into the house presently, if I had not kept a warm fire upon them; I heard them call out several times, 'I am shot, I am wounded;' still they said 'they would have me, and do for me.' I had various attacks in the night; I saw no fire-arms they had till eleven or twelve in the night; they were driving at the door about ten, but I cannot tell with what; I looked through the door, and saw their hands moving, driving something hard against it.

About twelve they fired into the house, both in the front and the rear; the balls struck the ceiling in the room where I was, sometimes close over my head; as they were in the street, and I in the one-pair of stairs, the balls went into the ceiling, and dropped down on the floor; I could not walk about the room with any safety. I was forced to place myself by the wall between the windows, and sometimes I would crawl under the window to the next, and sometimes I stood behind the brackets; then I would stand up and drive among them like dung; I have seen their balls strike the ceiling as I have stood under the cover of the wall, and as I have been going to fire, they have come over my head, and some lodged in the ceiling.

"This firing continued all the night and all the morning at different periods.

"When I attacked them backwards, I used to crawl out of the window on my belly, and lie upon the wash-house leads with my arms; I have heard them say, 'You that have arms are to fire upon him, and you that have stones are to heave, and so many to break the door, and so many to climb the wall.' If they got up there, they could get in at the window from the leads. I had Gilberthorp below to guard the door, for part of the front door was broke. I got off, I believe, about nine in the morning, when I had no more ammunition left, only the charge that I had in my blunderbuss, except what was in the musket, that would not go off; so I said to the men that were in the house, 'You see they are firing from every quarter, there is no help for me, they will come in, and I can make no return upon them to check their insolence; the best way to make them desist is for me to get out of the house, you will all be very safe whether I make my escape or not.' Mr. Gilberthorp said, 'Do what you think best.' I said, 'They only want me; if they get me it is all over, or if they know I am gone, they will desist.' I took my blunderbuss over my arm, and my drawn hanger in my hand, and went out of the back window upon the leads; I saw several of them in the alley. I levelled the blunderbuss at them, and said, 'You rascals, be gone, or I'll blow your brains out, especially you (that was to one under me); but I scorn to take your life.' He said, 'God bless you, Mr. Green, you are a brave man;' he clapped his hand on his head, and ran away. I went over into Mr. Mereton's ship-yard; one of the shipwrights met me; just as I jumped, he said, 'Mr. Green, follow me;' he took me to a saw-pit, and showed me a hole at the end where the sawyers used to put their things; he said, 'Go into that hole, you will be safe enough;' said I, 'Don't drop a word but that I am gone over the wall;' I got in, he left me; there I lay till the Guards came. I heard the mob search for me; some said he is gone one way, some another; they were got into the yard; I heard one of the shipwrights say he is gone over the wall, and gone away by water.

"When the Guards came, one of the shipwrights came to me, and desired to know what

I should do; I said, 'Go and tell the officer to draw his men up and come into the yard, and I will surrender myself to him.' The soldiers came, and I came out of the saw-pit; I had nothing but my handkerchief about my head; I had been wounded between ten and eleven at night. I surrendered myself to the officer; Justice Hodgson said, 'Mr. Green, you are one of the bravest fellows that ever was; who do you intend to go before, me or Sir John Fielding?' I said, 'I do not care who it is;' then said he, 'You will go before me;' accordingly we went, and when I came there he committed me to Newgate."

Seven men — Grainger, Clark, Cornwall, Lynch, Murray, Flaherty, and M'Cabe — were tried for this riot on the 21st of April, 1768.

The evidence against these desperate, cruel, and cowardly rascals was quite conclusive. Cornwall had been seen firing at Green's window. Clark, whose brother was shot by Green, had also discharged a musket. Grainger had thrown brickbats. Flaherty was seen firing from the garret window of a neighbouring house. M'Cabe had asked a man present for his sleeve buttons to load with, and M'Cabe was heard inquiring for pewter spoons and pots to cut into slugs.

Some of the prisoners declared they were there, but only with the design of keeping the peace, and preventing the escape of Green, who they maintained had been guilty of murder by firing out of his windows. All seven men were brought in guilty and sentenced to death, and on the 26th of July they were all hung.

In 1769, the Spitalfields "cutters" anticipated the recent savagery of Sheffield, and then came a lull in London streets till, in 1780, the terrible Lord George Gordon riots flamed out, and intolerance let loose murder and rapine once more, and did its best to make Protestants rival the St. Bartholomew massacre.

JOHN SKEEME, THE PROMOTER.

IN TWO PARTS. PART II.

SOME few months after Mr. Skeeme had become chairman of the Universal Discount Company, things went very badly with me in a pecuniary way. After leaving the army I had tried my hand at speculation in shares, and had lost two-thirds of what little money I had. I then set up in business as a foreign commission agent, and lost the remainder. My cousin — the Guardsman to whom John Skeeme was formerly valet — used to keep me a little, but he had his own family and his own responsibilities, and could not of course do very much for one who really had no claim upon him. Moreover, I disliked the idea of living upon charity. I could not bet, and did not understand the art of living at the rate of twelve or fifteen hundred a year without any visible means of existence. In short, I wanted to turn my hand to something that would earn me an honest livelihood, and it struck me that I could not do better than look

out my old friend the Promoter, and ask him to give me a helping hand.

To find the offices of the Universal Discount Company was not difficult. In the centre and soul of business London—the district bounded by Bishopsgate-street on the east, the Mansion House on the west, the end of Moorgate-street on the north, and King William-street on the south—every one knew the whereabouts of that most celebrated undertaking. Towards it I bent my steps, and of the wealthy-looking burly porter—that man who at a glance could tell the monetary condition of all who addressed him—I asked for Mr. Skeeme. The question seemed to astonish the highly respectable servant. I had been too abrupt. It was as if I had driven to Marlborough House, and asked the sentinel on duty to show me up to the Prince of Wales. “Mr. Skeeme does come here,” was the reply, in a supercilious tone which made me feel very small, “but he ain’t here now, and what might you please to want?” The janitor evidently thought that I must be after no good, and that I perhaps had the intention of getting some of the vast funds of the “Universal Discount Company” by force from the chairman. “Was I a friend of Mr. Skeeme’s, or did I come on business?” “Yes, a very old friend.” “Well, that was board-day, Mr. Skeeme would be there about two o’clock, and if I would come about three, perhaps he would see me.”

I did come about three, and having sent up my card, the porter came back most respectfully, begging I would follow him, and that “Mr. Skeeme would see me in five minutes.”

The five minutes lengthened into ten, fifteen, twenty. But when the great man made his appearance, his manner assured me that no slight whatever was meant by the delay, and that if the City magnate earned money, he certainly worked for it, and worked hard too. He was “very glad indeed,” he said, “to see me,” but “if I wanted to speak to him beyond three minutes, I must come out to his house, for he had not now a moment to spare. It was half-past three, and he had an appointment” (here he rang a hand-bell, and ordered a Hansom immediately) “at the ‘Great Southern Railway’ at 3.45; and another at the ‘Deep Sea Mining Company’ at 4.30. But would I come the next day but one, Sunday, and dine at his house in Kensington Palace Gardens, at six sharp? Always dine early on Sunday; servants go to church; day long. Come, and we’ll talk over anything you want.” Saying this, Skeeme took my arm, to the amazement of the hall porter, who had the cab ready, and was pompously opening the half doors of the same, so that the great man might enter without trouble. We had just got to the street, when Skeeme said, “If you are going my way, I can give you a lift; jump in, for I forgot to say something to you;” and so off we bundled together.

Once the cab in movement, Skeeme began to speak. “Don’t be annoyed,” he said, “but if

between this and to-morrow you want money, tell me frankly. Don’t stand on ceremony. I have some blank cheques in my pocket-book, and can fill you in one for twenty, thirty, or forty pounds, only tell me exactly what, and we’ll talk over details to-morrow.” But I hastened to assure Skeeme that, although very much in want of something to do, I was in no immediate necessity for money.

To Kensington Palace Gardens I betook myself the next Sunday. The house in which Skeeme lived was one of the best in that haven of millionaires. I had never been in a mansion of the kind before. Everything in it seemed so new, so fresh, so expensive, and so good of its kind, that you felt lost whether to summarise your opinion as to whether the evident lately acquired wealth was offensive, or the number of modern contrivances were to be praised. The hall was covered with pictures—game pieces, fruit pieces, fish pieces, the irrepressible replica of the abbot receiving the stag and the salmon at the porch of the monastery, the oil portrait of the favourite horse, the oil copy of two or three of Landseer’s dogs—in short, the actual ornamentation was, on a small scale, what Belvoir or Raby Castle might be on a large scale. But there was a newness about everything. The pictures seemed to have been painted to order, of a size to suit certain places or spare parts of the wall. There were stags’ heads (from Wardour-street) upon which riding and hunting whips hung, that had the fault of everything else about the place—they were much too new. My hat was taken by a butler in a new suit of black, my great-coat by a footman in a still newer suit of livery, and I was ushered through a boudoir hung in pale yellow satin that was newer still, into a drawing-room ornamented with a pale blue material which was newest of all. Nothing could be finer nor in better taste than each particular article of furniture, but, as a whole, it had the fault which pervaded the whole house—every chair, table, picture, statuette, mirror, frame, fire-iron, writing ornament, the very grates—expressed that they had all got there by contract from their respective makers’ hands at one and the same moment.

Not so Mrs. Skeeme—formerly housekeeper and cook at my cousin’s. She, poor woman, had certainly not got younger since the days when she lived in South Audley-street. She was the only old looking object in the room, and was none the less pleasant to look at for that reason. The poor old soul did not appear to have risen either in spirits or in education with her rise in life. She was in constant dread that all the finery round her would vanish as quickly as it came. She welcomed me in a half-kind, half-diffident manner, as if she wanted to be cordial with me, and yet did not like me to think that she had forgotten how in old times I had known her as a servant. At dinner, however, Mrs. Skeeme was in her own element. The dinner was excellent; not a dish too much, nor a thing badly cooked. The mistress of the house evidently understood what

to order, how to order it; nor had her lord and master forgotten his cunning as to the wine. Of the latter there was plenty without profusion. Very soon after dinner was finished Mrs. Skeeme left us to ourselves, and then commenced the conversation which I had sought for.

"And so you want something to do," said Skeeme. "I have been thinking over what little you told me, and have hit upon a plan which I think will assist you, only you must not be offended if I offer you what might appear strange with reference to the former position in which you knew me."

I replied that I would be only too glad if anything I could get to do would give me bread and cheese.

"Would you mind," said Skeeme, "serving under me? I ask you this before going further or saying more, as I will not make you, the offer I am going to unless I see clearly that you do not object to being nominally, as it were, in my service."

"Not in the very least," I answered. "I would much rather serve you than any man I don't know, and very much rather than with many whom I do know. What is it you propose?"

"My idea is that you should become my private secretary—that is, nominally. You will have to attend every day at the Great Southern Railway, of which I am chairman, and work there in my private room. Your salary will be two hundred pounds a year, which will be nominally paid you by me, but really by the company." (This, I afterwards found out, was a pious fraud of my worthy old friend's, who really paid me out of his own pocket.) "You will have a good deal to do, for as (this between ourselves) I fully expect to get into parliament in a few weeks, I shall have much less time than at present to attend to my own business. My private correspondence, and all that, will be in your hands. The salary is small, but if you pay attention to what is passing around you in the railway and finance world, you will very soon be able to pick up wrinkles by which a few pounds can be turned, and I need hardly say that any way I can help you in this, I will gladly do so. And now we'll go to coffee."

Nothing connected with Skeeme and his rise, fall, and rise again in fortune, surprised me more than the way in which his manners had kept pace with his advancement in life. With the exception of certain liberties he still took with the poor letter H, there was hardly anything about him that reminded me of the old times when he was a lacquey. That he should dress well and quietly, or that he should behave at table as if he had moved in the best society from the day he left school, were acquirements which a keen, quick-witted man, could hardly have failed to pick up during his years of valetdom. But what did astonish me was the total change in his manners. Formerly he was at all times and in all places the same staid,

steady, slow-speaking upper-servant—perfectly civil, knowing his own place, and yet having a due quantity of self-respect, but still a servant in looks and in speech. In the City he was the hurried, bustling man of business, who either never has, or never allows that he has, time enough to get through all his work. But at home he had all the ways of a well-to-do gentleman, whose greatest labour was to shoot partridges, ride to hounds, go over his agent's accounts, or, if in London, walk to White's, and there pass away an hour with the Times or Post.

Mr. Skeeme had, however, one great advantage, or "pull," as it is vulgarly called, over others who had risen from the lower ranks to a place in "society," which was, that so many years had elapsed since he was a valet, hardly any one remembered him in that capacity. London has this, if it has no other, advantage over the rest of the world, namely, few people know, and still fewer care, who their neighbour is, where he is going, or whence he came. Twenty years ago in London! Who cares to ask or to know what you or I were doing half that time past? Skeeme had the advantage of this. In Liverpool, or Manchester, or Bristol, he would have been spoken of to the day of his death, if he had lived to fourscore, as the rich man who was once a gentleman's valet. In London, few ask what a man has been, all they care to know is what he is, especially if he be a director of several companies, a great authority on finance and railways, and spoken of as likely to be soon in parliament, promoter of some "General and Universal Confidence Company, Limited," or chairman of a "Universal Discount," or "Great Southern Railway Company." If by chance any one asked the question as to where or how he had taken his rise, the answer was that he had been many years "something in the City;—a discount agent, they believed, but were not sure."

About a week after dining at Mr. Skeeme's, I took up my appointment as private secretary to that gentleman. My duties consisted in being at the office of the Great Southern Railway every morning soon after ten, when I had to open each letter received for the great Mr. Skeeme, mark down in a book from whom it came, draw up a précis of the contents of each, and be ready to take my chief's directions as to what reply was to be sent to each communication. Some letters I answered in my own name, others I took to Mr. Skeeme to sign, and the more particular ones—from bankers, great City men, lords, members of parliament, and other persons of standing—my chief would reply to in his own hand; although I generally drafted even the commonest notes. There was one thing in which Skeeme had not risen with his circumstances: he wrote, as he always had done, a very good hand, but his mode of expressing himself was anything but clear, and his spelling was eccentric. The few letters or notes that he penned himself, were written in a room next

to the one in which I sat, and I have known him—when I did not draft the letter—ask perhaps how to spell a dozen words whilst writing as many lines. There were some errors in orthography which he seemed never to get over. Thus he had apparently an invincible dislike to double letters, especially the double *p*; so that he would apriize his correspondent to make an appointment to appropriate shares.

But at accounts few men could equal Skeeme. Let the cleverest of accountants jumble together, so as to make them unintelligible, the capital account of a line, the debentures, the preference stock and the rolling stock, he saw through the dodge in ten minutes, and having separated the wheat from the chaff, very soon showed how matters ought to be, and where was truth and where falsehood. As chairman of the Great Southern he had a somewhat difficult task to perform. The line was not paying, and the shareholders were every year grumbling more and more because it did not do so. Some of the directors wished to keep things quiet, "to make matters pleasant," by fabricating little dividends, and out of the capital paying a certain interest so as to prevent the grumbling becoming too loud. They were not actually dishonest men—they thought of their line as Mr. Macawber did of his fortunes, that some day, sooner or later, "something would turn up," which would enable them to repay to the capital what they had borrowed in order to expend as interest. And, after all, was not the capital the property of the shareholders? If you borrowed a few thousands from it every year, did not these moneys go into the pockets of these same shareholders? And what was the use of telling everything to the great body of shareholders? Some of them were lawyers, these were chiefly rogues; others—many—were women, these were mostly fools; was it not better to keep things smooth and quiet, and wait with patience until that something which they so earnestly expected should turn up?

I don't say that these were altogether the opinions of Skeeme, but they were those of most of his colleagues, and as he was a very large shareholder in the concern, he wished as much as possible to keep up the value of his property. Railway stock was just then commencing to look very bad indeed. On some lines the one hundred pounds stock was selling as low as fifty pounds, forty pounds, and even thirty pounds. In other companies even the debenture-holders could get no interest for their money, and in one or two instances the preference shareholders were in the same predicament. Before I had been long in the office, I saw very clearly what was the end and aim of Mr. Skeeme's working; in fact, he acknowledged it to me one day. He held a very large amount of shares in the Great Southern, and foreseeing that the system of railway account cooking could not last for ever, he wanted by

degrees—little by little, so as not to attract observation—to sell out, if not all, the greater part of his stock, so that when the evil day came his loss would be comparatively small. But to do this at the prices which then ruled would be folly, therefore he was working his utmost to raise the value of the shares before he threw his own on the market. He had promised, when I first joined him, to let me into any "real good thing" that turned up, and it was in showing me how he would befriend me that I discovered the plan he had of working the oracle to his own advantage.

The shares stood at sixty, and to increase their value in the market an increase of traffic or a decrease of expenses must be shown. To do the latter was impossible—or next to it—for the reason that every official on the line, from the traffic manager and secretary to the policemen and porters, were more or less the friends—and all the nominees—of the directors. I remember an instance in which it was attempted to reduce by five per cent the salaries of all officers who received more than one hundred pounds a year, and I shall never forget the storm it raised. Long before it could be carried out the secretary of the company was inundated with letters, petitions, remonstrances, and I know not what, from all, or nearly all, the shareholders of the line. Mr. Jones of Stoke Newington asked whether it was just that his son (who was deputy-assistant sub-secretary, and received one hundred and fifty pounds a year for hindering the work of the office) should have his salary reduced by seven pounds ten shillings, at a time when beef was eleventeenpence, and the best mutton threepence a pound? Mr. Williamson of Swansea wrote to say that he considered it most infamous that his nephew should, after working hard for three years in the accountant's office, be reduced from two hundred pounds to one hundred and ninety pounds; and Mrs. James, a large shareholder and extensive philanthropist, came herself to see the Chairman, and told him that she would at once throw all the stock she held upon the market, if the two Station-masters down the country for whom she had got places, had their salaries reduced by five pounds a year each. What could be done with such people? To reduce the expenses of the line appeared to be impossible, and therefore all that could be done was to increase the receipts: but how?

There was a small fishing village about twenty miles from our line of railway, of which few people had ever heard, but which it was said by Mr. Skeeme and others could easily be turned into a very fashionable bathing-place. The local medical men were asked for Statistics about the health of the place, and such returns were given that the only wonder is every old person in the three kingdoms did not immediately flock there. The place was perfection; all it wanted was a few streets, and some people to inhabit them; but, above all things it required, was a line of railway, and this the

Great Southern Company proposed at once to construct. An act of parliament authorising a line between Seaville and a certain station on the Great Southern, was very easily obtained, the more so as there was really no one to oppose it. Skeeme, having got into parliament, worked it through himself. The shares on this new branch line were not offered to the public; they were all taken up by Mr. Skeeme himself, his friends, brother-directors and their friends—the balance, or unappropriated shares, being put down to the Great Southern Railway Company. The way in which the capital for the undertaking was provided was simple in the extreme. The amount required was something considerable—I mean considerable to the minds of those persons who had not had a financial training—something over a million and a half. About a third was wanted at once, and this Mr. Skeeme, being also chairman of the “Universal Discount Company,” as also a director of the “General and Universal Confidence Company,” very easily managed. Having got me to lend my name as nominal contractor for the line—for it was not, perhaps, quite the thing that his name should appear in *that* transaction—I drew bills for the five hundred thousand pounds upon the Great Southern Railway Company, and these Mr. Skeeme, in his capacity as chairman of the company, accepted. The accepted bills were then taken, some to the “Universal Discount Company,” of which Mr. Skeeme was chairman, others to the “General and Universal Confidence Company,” of which he was a director, and they were discounted at a very respectable figure. With this money the line was commenced, and when a certain portion of it was finished, debentures were offered to the public at something like thirty-eight pounds in cash for one hundred pounds-worth of stock. Thus from one hundred and fifty thousand to two hundred thousand pounds was raised in addition to the five hundred thousand pounds previously obtained; and as the traffic on the line had commenced over that part that was finished, the receipts were made to swell the credit side of the Great Southern Railway account. In the next session of parliament a bill for another extension line—this time towards part of a great coal district—was carried through, and the same process was repeated with respect to the borrowing transactions. In all these little financial feats Skeeme invariably allowed me my little pickings, which in course of time amounted to something very respectable, and I began not only to acquire wealth, but actually to get a taste for a business in which, as it appeared to me, it was always certain winning for those behind the scenes. In my army days, when I knew nothing of business, I should have compared my new gains to playing with loaded dice.

We had, in the course of three years, two branch lines at work, both of which were so made to show a profit in the accounts, and to swell the traffic receipts, that our shares soon began to

move upwards. Thus we carefully published every month in the newspapers that our traffic receipts, for instance, in July, were nine thousand four hundred and eighty-seven pounds four shillings and twopence, which, as compared with those of July in the previous year, being eight thousand one hundred and ten pounds six shillings and fourpence, or in the July of the year before that again, being six thousand and nine pounds nineteen shillings and a penny—facts which no one could dispute. The figures thus shown were quite correct, and the comparison made was perfectly true. But what we did not think it worth while to enlighten the public upon, was the fact that for every ten pounds of increased receipts we had—what with discount paid for bills, premiums upon debentures, and all the various losses incidental upon raising money at ruinous rates—sunk for ever at least two thousand pounds of capital, which had gone where last year's snow was.

In this way the shares in the Great Southern rose higher and higher, and as I had invested money—lent me by Skeeme—in purchasing the shares at forty, which I now sold for fifty-five, fifty-eight, and sixty, the speculation turned out by no means a bad one.

All this time Skeeme must have been rolling up money very fast. From holding many thousand pounds-worth of Great Southern scrip, he had now reduced the amount he held to a mere trifle, and all he sold were parted with at a premium. His property in the Seaville and Coaltown Junction lines he quietly “obliged” the Great Southern with. The process was not difficult. At a board meeting he and three or four other directors who were shareholders in those branch undertakings, would ask their own leave that the shares should be bought, and upon their own consent being given, they entered the transaction in the minute-book, and ratified the proceedings at the next board meeting. That is what the inventor of the process named “making things pleasant.”

Mr. Skeeme is no longer chairman of the Great Southern Railway. Soon after the little transactions I have noted in this paper, his health compelled him to retire from business, although he still retains his seat upon the direction of the “Universal Discount Company.” He is now a very wealthy man. He owned one night lately to me, after a second bottle of the most unexceptional '20 port I ever tasted, that he would not take a hundred and fifty thousand pounds for the money he had invested in India Bonds, Consols, and Bank of England Stock, and I believe him. He has sold his house in Kensington Palace Gardens, and bought a very splendid “mansion” in the New South Kensington district. His dinners are much thought of, and some of the best people in London are to be met with at his table.

As for myself, I have long given up the situation I held as private secretary to Mr. Skeeme, and have set up in business as a Financial Agent. There is very little doing at present in

my line, but I dare say "a good time" is "coming," when people return to town after the holidays.

BROWN STUDIES.

"LIKE will to like," but it must have been something more than the indulgence of this propensity—an apocryphal one at best—that assembled in the little village of Brownham in the Moors, at which it was my hap to reside for two years with a private tutor, so many individuals of identical name.

My excellent tutor, to begin with, was the Reverend Philip Brown. He had married a cousin, Miss Gertrude Brown, whose band of sisters, forming a rich handful of brown-haired, brown-cheeked Browns, visited us in detachments as opportunity and accommodation permitted. The duties of the incumbency requiring assistance, Mr. Brown had recently engaged a curate, and but little surprise was felt by those who knew the place when it transpired that *his* name also was Brown.

Our squire and lord of the manor headed the list, however, with what might be called a double subscription, he being the Honourable Brown Brown. The smaller fry followed suit. The village school was under the control of a gentleman who was distinguished from his brother Browns by the surname of Cocky, or Cock-eye Brown. The clerk was Brown, and he being the sixth in lineal descent who had officiated in that capacity, the man would have been bold who attempted to divorce the office from the colour. The exciseman was Brown, "Big" Brown. The postman Brown—"Little," or, at times, "Cheeky" Brown. The landlord of our little inn—the Brown Bear—was Brown. In addition to these, the village street was embrowned from end to end, inasmuch that I am not romancing when I aver that there were not five shops in the place that did not exhibit the popular name, either as actual proprietor, or successor to some "late Brown."

To see the intercourse of this little community carried on without any apparent mistake gave me both interest and surprise. To a certain extent it was smooth sailing. One can understand the distinctions derived from commerce—Brown the baker, Brown the smith, Brown the barber, fish Brown, peddling Brown; but how about the Browns of no occupation, idle, loafing Browns, drinking, and, it was to be feared, poaching Browns, to whose proceedings the attention of our police protector, Brown, L 23, was often furtively directed? "Thief" Brown, "Skulker" Brown, "Returned-convict" Brown, were prefixes which, however appropriate, might occasionally lead to a misunderstanding. Personality, as a rule, is best avoided. How, then, to fix your man? "Young" Brown would be simply absurd; Brown, son of the elder Brown, "*old* Brown's son, you know," would be little better, since the memory of the very oldest inhabitant (a

man named Brown) recalls no period when there were not at least three generations of the same family of Browns flourishing in Brownham. Names were better arranged in the days when Higg could never have been confounded with his father Snell, or Wamba mixed up inextricably with his civic ancestor the "alderman."

The village, however, *did* manage to discriminate; and although the process was as mysterious as is, to the uninstructed eye, the working of a steam-engine, the result was as precise and as effectual. Some peculiar intonation, some gesture of the speaker's eye, or nose, or chin, seemed to indicate at once *which* Brown was meant; and while my reverend tutor never, by his own confession, proclaimed the banns between bachelor and spinster Browns without some misgiving as to the sufficiency of the identification, the village itself was never at fault, seldom had recourse to nicknames, except as a luxury, and separated John Brown (half wink) from John Brown (toss of the chin) and John Brown (sniff), as completely as if the most elaborate portrait had been executed of each of the three. But to be understood and at ease in this, study and experience were necessary. I shall not soon forget the pains it cost me to acquire the particular sniff that pointed out the last-named John as the subject of conversation!

The bewilderment of strangers who found themselves splashing and struggling in this torrent of Browns, without such corks as we have mentioned, was amusing enough. The clearest intellect might have experienced some confusion. It did. During my stay at Brownham, a case was tried at the neighbouring assize town involving a disputed right of way. As frequently happens in such cases, a large body of witnesses had been summoned, and of those engaged in the cause—"Brown and Another v. Browne Browne," it chanced that at least four-fifths belonged to our village and vicinity. Need it be added that these, almost to a man, were Browns?"

It was puzzling enough for the sharp-witted counsel to keep their Browns from entangling. But the real labour devolved upon the unfortunate judge, who, in endeavouring to collate and present to the jury the whole body of evidence, was driven almost to his wits' end.

"The testimony, gentlemen," said his lordship, "of that very intelligent witness, James Brown—confirmed in all its leading particulars by that of the witness Brown—I mean, James Brown—that is, the *other* James Brown—demands your most serious attention. For while, on the one hand, the respective affidavits of Peter Brown and George Brown—not to speak of the oral testimony of Stephen, Philip, and"—(consulting his notes)—"yes, and William—William, gentlemen—Brown—point to the conclusion that the connexion of James Brown with the property of the Browne Browne family dates from so early a period as the decease of Peter Brown the elder—on the *other* hand,

we have the combined declaration of Samuel, George, Josiah, and John Thomas Brown—fortified by that of another witness named—ah! yes!—also named Brown—that the appointment of James Brown as land steward to the Browne Browne estates, supplied John Brown, James Brown's son and agent, with all the opportunity—Peter—that is, George—of course, I mean James Brown, himself, enjoyed.

"The evidence of the succeeding witness, Brown—Josiah—stay, gentlemen—George Brown," continued his lordship, wiping his brow—"the son, I take it, of William Brown (this similarity of surname is most embarrassing)—Brown, I say, our tenth witness and ninth of the name!—this young Brown's testimony contradicts in one material particular that of Stephen Brown. George Brown asserts—Stephen Brown as positively denies—that James Brown, Thomas Brown, and a third individual named—let me see, ha!—I should have been surprised to find it otherwise!"—(a laugh)—"also Brown—that these three Browns, together with James Brown of Brownham—which, gentlemen?—why, gentlemen, the Brown—the—the witness—father Brown, the Brown brother—I protest, gentlemen, in all my judicial experience, I never met with so singular a case. Not only have we to deal with the evidence of twenty-nine individuals of similar name, but my learned friends on either side have joined the conspiracy, and are, moreover, instructed by solicitors of that name; while the foreman and five other members of the jury are Browns also!"

A hearty laugh followed the judge's sally. It was silenced by the officer of the court. His name was Brown.

Tradition had it that an innocent stranger, employed in some matter of business, descended at the Brown Bear from the Brown coach, driven by old Mat Brown, and inquired for the dwelling of a Mr. Brown. Forty fingers referred him to every point of the compass.

"I was told he would be known at the Bear," faltered the traveller.

"Rather think he were," returned a bystander. "It's kep' by Mister Brown."

"Not *mine*, though," said the stranger, smiling. "Perhaps the postmaster——"

"His name's Brown."

"Or the clerk could——"

"So's hisn."

"So's yourn," remarked another bystander to the last speaker, apparently for the information of the traveller.

"Ain't he got some other name for to tell'n by?" asked the first speaker; "Chucks? or Perky? Big? Booser? Cock-eye? Peddling? Thief? There's such a lot of 'em, you see."

"I do see," said the stranger, sullenly.

"Hang the name! Well, then, *John* Brown; I don't know that he has any other."

"Which on 'em, now? there's a tidy lot o' Johns. What's he like, sir?" asked old Mat, as he prepared to remount his box.

"Well, except that he has parchment-coloured whiskers, and——"

"'Whitey' Brown, for tuppence!" sung out old Mat. "Show the gen'l'man his place, Bill Brown."

Mat was right.

Brown, the clerk, was perhaps my most esteemed friend. He was a fine old patriarch, with long hair, intensely white, falling over the collar of his black coat—for, more scrupulous than any divine of my acquaintance, he never departed from the clerical sables and white tie—and, even when engaged in that livelier portion of his duties, which consisted in grave-digging, merely laid aside, for the moment, his coat and cravat. At church he was supported, on either side, by his son and grandson, both destined for the clerical office in due succession, both copying, in the minutest particular, the style and manner of their elder, even to the adoption of those little errors and mispronunciations which had been handed down from the remotest Brown of whom any record existed. The reverend vicar, whose scholarly and sensitive ear was outraged by these "improvements," did make a faint attempt to correct them. He might as well have striven to move the church itself. Mr. Brown had bowed stiffly and respectfully, as in acquiescence, but indemnified himself, on the earliest occasion, by repeating, in a raised, instructing tone, the disputed words. To say truth, pastor Brown was a little afraid of clerk Brown, so the matter was allowed to drop. The old gentleman was a conservative to the backbone. He was such a foe to innovation, that the changes in the book of Common Prayer, rendered necessary by those which occurred in the reigning family of this realm, always cost him a pang. Though by principle a loyal man, it was some time before Mr. Brown could be got to lend a cordial assent to the accession of our present gracious sovereign in lieu of him for whom he had so long prayed, and only yielded his sanction to the birth of a Prince of Wales on its being pointed out to him that it was but reverting to a form he had used half a century since.

Dear old boy! To the day of his death he never made up his mind how to deal with that response in the churching of women, in which, in the event of a plurality of ladies, some deviation from the printed text is unavoidable. Mr. Brown effected a compromise. He altered half. "Who putteth their trustesses in Thee," appeared to reconcile the difficulty.

Brown, surnamed Cocky, or Cock-eye—I never ascertained which, or whether it bore reference to a peculiarity of vision, or to a certain arrogance of manner, both of which he possessed—Brown, I say, conducted the village school. A real blessing and benefactor to the matron Browns of the vicinity, Cocky gathered up the noisier elements of the place, and, from nine to two o'clock, toiled at the education of his shock-headed pupils in a manner never before attempted. From the moment lessons began, till they ended, the schoolroom was in a perpetual tumult, above which Cocky's voice might be occasionally heard rising in a disso-

nant scream. This was only when the noise became absolutely intolerable, or when more than the average number of personal encounters, engaging themselves at the same time, threatened to attract interference from without. For, strange to say, Cocky liked the disturbance, and sent his scholars rioting up the tree of knowledge in such sort, that, could strife and clamour have done it, not a leaf would have been left unplucked upon that glorious stem. As it was, I am afraid, many got serious falls, and didn't try again.

Barrow Brown was another of my allies. In accordance with what seemed to be the prevailing custom, I had been in the habit of accosting him as "Barrow" for some time before I made the discovery that his name was not at all "Barrow," but, on the contrary, Job. His history was singular—in some respects, pathetic. Job, otherwise Barrow, Brown, was the victim of an unfortunate misconception, which, in costing him his good name, supplied him with another that stuck to him for life.

Job's mission, from the cradle, was the doing little odd jobs. Early manhood surprised him still engaged in this interesting and varied but not very lucrative employment—engaged, moreover, to a young lady whose name, for a wonder, was not Brown, and who, much to Job's discomfiture, exhibited considerable reluctance to make it so. She was the daughter of a somewhat haughty fishmonger of the next village, and was considered by her friends to have acted unadvisedly in plighting her very capricious troth to a man in Job's position. With a patience worthy of his name, the poor young fellow endured for a long period such tortures as only a spoiled village beauty can inflict, to perfection, upon her devoted Damon or Silvius. It is possible he would have brought matters to a crisis with his Adina precisely as did Nemorino—by "listing," in accordance with the advice of a friend, recruiting-sergeant Dick Brown—but for the solemn promise of his mistress, cemented with a broken sixpence, of which each possessed half, that nothing short of some great misconduct of his own should annul the pledge she had given him. Upon this Job lived. This, in his own words, "kep' him straight." For this he abjured the blandishments of the Brown Bear, was a stranger to the good dry skittle-ground, and subscribed (without any definite object, except that it looked and sounded steady) to the village burial club.

These precautions were of no avail. In a fatal hour, Job's evil genius threw in his way an odd job which involved a barrow. Little thought poor Job, when he borrowed Stephen Brown's, and trundled merrily away, that he was wheeling his godfather! The day was hot, the burden heavy. Job halted, for a minute, at a roadside beer-house. He had a pot of beer—a whole pot. He had another. A friend appearing, Job generously ordered a third, whereof the pair partook, and also of two more.

The result is singular, and, for a very long

period, was enveloped in an impenetrable cloud of mystery. The load, of whatever it consisted, was delivered in safety, but the barrow returned no more. Mr. Brown was seen, late that evening, staggering in the direction of his home, persistently stopping every passer-by in order to secure their testimony (in case of need) that he was perfectly sober, or, as he himself expressed it, "all right." But he made no mention of the barrow.

The owner *did*, for the barrow was new, and, singularly enough (so, at least, it was affirmed in the village), Stephen Brown, in the visions of the night, had seen the apparition of his barrow, the wheel wanting, lifting a broken leg, as if in mute appeal for vengeance! His worst fears were confirmed, when Job, in confusion, blurted out certain vague and utterly irreconcilable statements, and finally declared that he could remember nothing at all about it. From this position nothing could dislodge him. At length his neighbour, losing all patience, avowed his conviction that Job had either maltreated the barrow in the diabolical manner suggested in the dream, or converted it into beer. Job indignantly repudiated both theories, but being unprepared with a better, an appeal was made to the law, when Mr. Brown limited himself to the same line of defence, namely, that he could remember nothing about it.

Whether the jury—of whom several were Browns—imagined that the barrow might have risen upon Job at an unguarded moment, and, having knocked him down insensible, absconded, cannot be known. At all events, they acquitted him, and Job—henceforward Barrow, or Barrer—Brown, returned home a whitewashed man. But this process of cleaning is not always satisfactory. Whitewash *will* come off, and people who are particular eschew a too frequent and intimate acquaintance with it. So it was with poor Job. He was declared by his country, upon which he had put himself, innocent—but the barrow remained unaccounted for. A shadowy suspicion still followed, and naturally followed, the individual last seen in its company; and the surname of Barrer, which originally meant no slur, got at last to convey a hint that Job was not so stainless as the verdict of an enlightened jury had pronounced him.

Let those who delight in expatiating upon the trusting character of woman's love, blush to hear that this illiberal opinion was endorsed by Job's mistress. He was informed by her proud sire, in a letter that had a strong aroma of periwinkles, that his Dorter regarded their engagement as at an end.

From this epoch dated the decline and fall of Job. One feeble effort he did make to preserve his steadiness, and to rehabilitate himself in public esteem. He rented a little shop—or rather shop-window—in the character of "Job Brown, Fruiterer and Fishmonger," but, the stock-in-trade being represented by three wrinkled and venerable pears in a saucer, and a small

company of "winkles," not above suspicion, in a pint measure, the net profits proved insufficient. From fruit and fish to "creases," from "creases" to groundsel, from groundsel to anything that could provide a meal, Job had sunk into the man I found him, when the necessity of procuring some wasp-grubs for bait led to our introduction and subsequent intimacy.

I had not known him long, when a curious event startled the whole village. The deceased barrow reappeared! It had been discovered in the heart of a clump of juniper-bushes, and (let psychologists explain the coincidence) mutilated precisely as represented in Stephen Brown's dream. How it got there was still a mystery, for the barrow was as inscrutable as Job, and returned to its usual habits as if nothing had occurred, frequently meeting the man it had ruined in the public ways. On these occasions Job would glare at it as if it were a deadly enemy, and mutter between his clenched teeth phrases which it would be a mistake to describe as benevolent.

The good thoughts of the world, once forfeited, are not easily regained; nevertheless, there is, in our beloved land, a sort of "follow-my-leader"-ship, especially if that leader be a person of quality, which sometimes repairs a wrong. Job's case met with much sympathy from the leading Browns of the place. It was, at least, clear that he had not stolen the barrow for the lucre of gain. Under the circumstances, it was proposed to raise a small compensatory subscription—a Brown Consolation Testimonial—by the aid of which he might recommence business on a better scale than formerly. To crown all, the haughty fishmonger, whose "Dorter" had given him a good deal of trouble, made the most flattering advances to Job, even hinting at the possibility of a future partnership, which (it appeared) Miss Spratt was, on her part, not disinclined to make a present one.

To the unspeakable amazement of everybody, Mr. Brown haughtily declined these gifts of fortune. Yes. Though, as he declared, he was so down in the world that he slep', as often as not, under a hayrick; though he had but one pair o' trousers in the world, and they was in holes; though the werry hat he wore was took in exchange from a scarecrow, 'cos hisn (the scarecrow's) was better in the brim; still, he, Job (improperly styled Barrer) Brown, would be (something through which the editor would infallibly strike his pen)—d if he would either accept alms in exchange for his good name, or marry the false-hearted jade who was prepared to wed with his prosperity, though she had jilted and deserted him in his day of trial.

The Job Browns of low life are sufficiently rare to justify (I hope) the space I have given to the simple story of my friend "Barrer."

How and why it was that Browns assembled, and, to this hour, continue to assemble, at Brownham, is a study for the antiquary as well as the philosopher. The parish archives teem with Browns, even to times so remote that the registers have become undecipherable. Every such coincidence must be traceable, however, to some especial cause. There dwells on Bantstead and on Leatherhead Downs a very pretty and peculiar snail, whose presence there, and nowhere else, for a long time puzzled the observant naturalist. It was, at length, revealed that, some generations since, a wealthy lady was directed by her physicians to take up her residence in those uplands, and, when the health-renewing breezes had restored to her vigour and appetite, to appease the latter by swallowing, among other things, a small esculent member of the snail family, whereof they kept her supplied in such abundance that the overplus were set at liberty to colonise the downs in the manner above mentioned.

Encouraged by this fact, I pursued my search so far as to unearth, among the parish records, the remnant of an ancient deed in sufficient preservation to indicate that a certain Dame Marjory Bevil Brown had established a "dole," or distribution of "bread and flesh," on market-days, to every applicant, of what condition soever, bearing the name of the beneficent donor.

Clanship itself has done no more.

In No. 443, for October the 19th, will be commenced a
NEW SERIAL STORY by the Author of "BELLA DONNA,"
"NEVER FORGOTTEN," &c., entitled

THE DEAR GIRL.

To be continued from Week to Week until completed
in Four Months.

A NEW SERIAL STORY,
BY WILKIE COLLINS,

Will also soon appear in these pages.

On Thursday, 12th December, will be published

THE

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[PRICE 2d.

THE DEAR GIRL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BELLA DONNA," "NEVER FORGOTTEN," &c.

INTRODUCTION.

ON a certain dark night, and in a line of travellers making for the port, we are beating up after hand-carts of luggage to where the night-packet is waiting round the corner, tuning a mournful ditty, with steam blowing off. It is a rueful procession; the tumbrils and lanterns give it the air of an execution. As we turn the corner, the wind comes thundering in from the sea; the white steam is borne fiercely towards us, and, at the same moment, is seen a bright blaze of light as from a gigantic lantern; the bow-window of the inn, cheerful, warm, encouraging, with the table set out, and the waiters standing to attention, with their napkins at the present. It was too inviting, and not to be resisted. One traveller at least fell out of the ranks, and let the train move on to execution. *They* had their night of horror, groans, creaking, pounding of angry seas, and cribbed and cabined horror and confusion: we, the bright cheerful inn, the pleasant repast, the brightest of bed-chambers, the snowiest of beds, and lightest of slumbers.

But suddenly, into the very heart of tranquil dreams of home and such far-off pictures and soft faces, intrudes a riotous confusion and hurly-burly, like the soldiers in the Days of Terror bursting in on some proscribed family at their prayers. The sun was streaming in at the large bow-window over the lower window we had seen last night; the clatter of tongues came pouring in with it, making wild havoc with the delicate network of Queen Mab. I looked out. It was the brightest, gauziest of mornings. The sun was shining; all the fishing-boats had come in; and below, under the window, were masts and rigging, and fish glittering like crystal or silver, and gay dresses, red petticoats, mahogany-coloured faces, and old men in nightcaps, who seemed carved in the ivory-work which was a speciality of the place, all set off with a shouting and vending from casks and a wild flourishing of blue-worsted arms. From the bow-window I see the little port as background, rescued from low-lying sand-banks, as if scooped with egg-spoons, with the

neat, small painstaking of the French in such matters; a brig or two opposite lying under shelter of the poor-looking hills, stripped as old trunks; and a little to the left began the regular semicircle of timber paling—the avenue of wickerwork, as it seems—the entry to every French port.

For this is Dieppe; but Dieppe in March, long before the season. We must wait all that day—an enforced stay; and I wander about, and see the gay and fashionable creature in a *déshabille* dressing-gown, curl-papers even, and nightcap. She looks sallow and plain without her rouge and feathers. There, round the corner, facing the sea, are the grand Hotels—*Royal*, of *England*, and what not, all shut up, and the lone lorn *établissement*, shabby, dingy, faded—like an abandoned circus. The sea is fresh and inviting, the sands smooth; but there is no one to bathe. There are no beauties, no toilettes, no gay carriages. I am nearly the only stranger in the place; yet, as I walk about through the cheerful streets and past the gay little shops—now by the Grand Place, where Captain Duquesne, all bronze hat and feathers, struts and flaunts and defies the English; now by the old church, St. Jacques, gorgeous as one of the mediæval lanterns in a collection—all sorts of recollections of an older Dieppe, a childhood's Dieppe, attend me or go on before. I know my way up to the old fort, out to old Sody's shop, where the Paris diligence used to come in. The picture is dim enough, confused as are all childish recollections; but it fills in gradually, helped by details from nurses and parents—a picture of the English colony days, the era when it was a sanctuary, and the Refuge. Curious talk, old stories—the story itself—come floating back. As I walk along, the figures fall in groups, crossing like the figures in a country dance. I see the diligences come in; the packets arrive; the decayed English of the colony taking their places. The parties and the cards are given in the little rooms over the shops; we hear the whispers of the last "story" going round; and, above all, THE GREAT SCANDAL, which kept them all busy speculating, asking, receiving, and circulating details for more than a year. The diligently restoring of this old picture made that day in Dieppe pass very lightly, very happily, perhaps very dreamily; and I now propose to present it, fresh and varnished, to the indulgent reader.

CHAPTER I. DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

IN those times—pre-railway times—the place had another air. It wore a quaint old-fashioned look, and flourished all the year round. It did not moulder away in the winter, but became more picturesque then in colours, costumes, and character. It had elements highly dramatic; comedy and tragedy were going on day and night. It seems to me now to have the air of Calais when the sentimental Sterne was travelling. Where is now the English colony, the strange settlers, the genteel “broken down,” the idle, the respectable, the adventurer, whom some misfortune (Dieppe courtesy included frailty as well as distress in that term) drove from fatherland; the infinite variety of character and profession? Even their dress—for they clung to the old English clothes, and proudly displayed them even in their decay—inspired an air of vagabond picturesqueness. What queer, fitful society on that parti-coloured French background! Curious clergymen, lively *ci-devant* or *soi-distant* officers, sudden comers, more sudden goers; nothing surprising, everything welcome; abundant curiosity, and everything known. “Delightful people” came, with the air of wealth; shone and glittered awhile, were charming, were called on, gave parties, and “were an addition to the society.” Of a sudden there was a void; their place knew them no more. It was like a death, but it caused no surprise.

Winter was the season proper for the exiles; the fashionables, of course, came down in the summer to bathe, and were seen in their fine dresses at the *établissement*. Not yet have come the flaunting rush of extravagant demireps, with their dozen dresses a day, from the imperial court. But the English had no sympathy with these fine strangers; they rather pool-pooled them. Strange English! wonderful English! The lowest, most broken of the whole, talked of the England that had used them so cruelly, and which would to a certainty seize on them and drag them off to iron-barred rude lodgings, with pride and even arrogance. Everything in that dear land was superior. They were identified with its glories; they had still part in everything that happened there. Everything English was superior to the poor wretched French who were sheltering them. The humblest “bag-man” whom they saw off by the packet they looked on with pride and respect—he was going to England. How many twinges they daily suffered as they turned away from that monotonous yet necessary ceremonial, for they knew *they* durst not set foot on the homeward-bound packet. The majors and reduced fathers spoke of Dieppe to each other as this “cursed hole;” and, by a fiction tacitly accepted, it was understood that every one could “get away” when he pleased, but was kept there by high concerns—“Education of my daughters,” “When my poor Mary’s health gets better, please God,” and the like. No one, however coarse-minded, had the indecency to pull off this genteel little veil; for there was a due reciprocity in such transactions. Every

one, too, was “getting back to England” shortly; and after the newspapers had been duly read, there was always plenty of pleasing conversation upon home affairs—a wondering what “Canning would do,” with an intimate knowledge of “Peel” and his mind, and an easy familiarity with the motions of the court and the royal family. This was maintained with a yet more intimate knowledge, in presence of some of the inferior race whose hospitality they were enjoying, and to whom they spoke with authority. This is all human nature again and again, and over again, as any one who watched these odd creatures would have great profit and entertainment in working out for himself—as any one, too, would find repeating itself at this very hour.

Yet all the colonists were not of this pattern. There were English and Irish families of good condition, and upright souls, who had found the French port more suited to their means; well-born and gentle widow ladies and their daughters; honest gentlemen of slender resources, who feared that at home they could not presently support themselves without debt, who left without owing a shilling, and who lived here comfortably and without anxiety, and paid their way honourably. It is but another touch of human nature to say that the Dieppe tradesmen had rather a contempt for these ladies and gentlemen who met their engagements so honourably, and “trusted” them much less than they did the noble and glittering customers, who ordered profusely and never paid so much as a franc. Nay, even their recollection of these open-handed sharpers was indulgent: they were “*pauvres garçons*!” so much does the manner of a thing enter into the thing itself.

All this seems as if written of a hundred years back, like the days of the Sentimental Journey; and yet it is not five-and-twenty years ago. At the end of a certain autumn about that time but few of the fine company were left, and the company that used to come streaming down the Grande Rue and Rue St. Jacques, down to the port, to see the packet come in, walking in the middle of the street on the round stones which make a French street look picturesque, had thinned off a good deal. That duty came like dinner. No decent resident would have missed it for the world. It was the most piquant moment of the enforced life, and between five and six we were sure to see old Filby—captain he was called, but “Heaven knows what rank he had held,” or in what service—and the good-looking young Backhouse, who wore jewellery, and Mrs. Dalrymple and her daughters; later, Mr. Blacker, the oldest resident, secretary to the English church, whom we shall know very well shortly, were seen posting down by odorous lanes, and “roos,” and short cuts, to the port.

Captain Filby was the sure sign and token of its being time to go down; for he started punctually, round as a martello tower, buttoned close in a pale brown coat, with a square face, and “damning” the stones at every step. He could

tell us plenty about the place, where he had been some fifteen years and more; a hard cruel old fellow, selfish, and alone in the world. But he knew everything about every one, that is, everything that was bad, and slew characters by the hour. Ask Boulaye, the wine-merchant and banker—"Bully the banker" he was invariably spoken of by the English; ask White, the popular single English doctor; ask Macan, the other doctor, struggling against a long family and a Mrs. White at home; ask the little Frenchwoman at the corner, who sold paper and steel pens like needles; ask Marshall, who kept the English restaurant—they all said he was "a screw" and a bad fellow. But still he was feared, and, when he chose, could be amusing. Some one arrived by the steamer yesterday (going away to-morrow morning by the diligence), and sitting down with him on the bench, gives him a good cigar. (He was surly at first, but the sight of the case had softened him.) It is surprising what a sketch of the place he gives in a bare ten minutes.

"Where are you stopping? Hotel Ryle? I wouldn't put my foot in such a place—you'll see how Le Buff will stick it on to-morrow morning. A regular nest of swindlers—of course he gets it out of his company who come here in the season. The Paris beau monde—by Gad! ha, ha!—they call 'em. Why, one good English gentleman would buy and sell the whole lot. You should see the set that came down here from Paris. Brummagem counts and dukes—fellars not to compare with a well-fed English shopboy. I know I wouldn't be the fool to forget my purse with an English tenpenny-note in it on the table of the Ryle. And as for the women, sir, the droves of brazen, painted, canvas and varnish;" but, indeed, it would not do to give the captain's language in full on *this* part of his subject. "No, you should go to Wheeler's, behind us here, a good English house, close to the packet—straightforward place, and something like beef and mutton—you'll get a beefsteak there something like, and you can see yesterday's Chronicle. I can tell you Wheeler's knocked many a napoleon out of the French rascals here, and is a rich man, and could buy and sell Le Buff and his Ryle twice over."

How envious are the little corners or garrets of the human heart! for there were English there who had heard the captain depreciate Wheeler as much as he was now doing Le Bœuf. But as between Wheeler and himself it was one question; between Wheeler and Le Bœuf, a "scurvy" Frenchman, it was another.

Captain Filby, with both hands fixed on the top of a strong stick, which had a large tassel, and puffing his cigar, would go on:

"Look at him! look at him! What a hurry you're in to be sure! That's Blacker, sir. Going to a sick call, indeed. Likely story! No, he's heard there's some little Jack of an honourable at the Ryle whom he wants to catch flying. I can hear him as plain as I do you. 'I am secretary to the English chapel here, sir. How do you do, sir? If I can be of the

smallest use, Mrs. Blacker shall call on your ladies;' and all that gammon, you know. He'll never take his soul to heaven with him, and don't want to, I dare say. Why, I know the fellow had to cut—cut, sir, from a small place in Shropshire, and left every little shopkeeper in the place unpaid, and yet he struts it here as if he was a dean. He has all the foolish women under his thumb, and don't he pick up his five-franc pieces at cards? I wouldn't sit down with that man, sir, at a game of whist, for a trifle. He affects to be king of the whole place. 'You must call on Mrs. Thingummy—charming people, just come.' And charming people they turn out. That's a fellow called West, as dry a chip as any high-and-dry Scotchman. He's the way of being the wise man of the place; and look at his sister, as tough and dry as himself—nice pair of Pundits *they* are. They are of the elect, sir—the virtuous. You and I are not good enough company for them. They must give a tone to the place. We're all raps, you know, here—ha, ha! Do you know that man—and he's a good forty-five if he's an hour—is a lover, sir—nothing short of a lover—consumed with fires, and all that! It's all Platonic advice with him. 'I've an interest in you, my dear; keep yourself apart from the set here,' and all that. But there isn't a fool in the town but sees the man is drivelling—drivelling over the girl, that little Dacres, and forgets his years and infirmities. And the jealous look-out the fellow keeps—stern as a johndarm. 'Not a breath, my dear, must sully your spotless purity.' Faugh! Spotless grandmother. It sickens me. I tell you what," added the captain, looking cautiously round, "that wise cocked-up fellow has a history tacked to him, as sure as my name's Filby; and I'll make it out yet. You don't know the queer things that bring people here. What does a fellow like that—a lawyer, too—want hanging about here? Why can't he show himself in his court, instead of spooning after young school-girls just half his age? Halloo! there we come. There's a show for you, sir. All English—true blue, every one. Let the French ma'amselles beat those cheeks, sir, if they can. One, two, three, four, five, six—there's a scraggy pair, but on the whole good and stuck-up Pringle, with her aide-de-camp, bringing up the rear." So would this amiable exile describe the points and characteristics of his companions in the settlement. It would be a very charitable person that would say "old Filby was soured." He was originally bad and ill-conditioned, and it was remarked that the only seasons he was in fair good humour was after some such expectation of gall and vinegar.

Round this course, to the left of the port, and facing the sea and the établissement, were the line of hotels, "Ryle" and others, and beyond them a terrace of private houses, with long gardens in front, like suburban houses. Over one little gate was a large gate, diligently barred, with a good English brass plate, on which was, in good English, "BOARDING SCHOOL FOR

YOUNG LADIES : Principal, Miss Pringle." Out of this establishment had now defiled the little procession, as just noticed by Captain Filby. They were not more than ten or a dozen strong, and the rosy cheeks and good complexions of the English "meeses" justly excited the admiration of French amateurs. But the tall Miss Pringle, carrying her head back as terribly, and a parasol sharp and long as a bayonet, kept a wary look out along the ranks, and seemed as dangerous a "customer" as a *gendarme*. Had not many of us seen in our *Galignani* an occasional little advertisement, "To English Families residing in France. Miss PRINGLE invites the attention of parents, guardians, and others, to the advantages of her establishment, situated in the most salubrious portion of Dieppe, and directly facing the sea; a limited number of young ladies. She is permitted to refer to the Rev. Frederick Burchell, chaplain to the English church, Dieppe; to M. Le Pasteur Pigou, Dieppe; to George Dick, Esquire, H.M. Consul, Dieppe; and to Mrs. Dick." Her pupils, however, were chiefly daughters of wealthy persons in trade at Brighton or Dover, anxious for the prestige of a daughter educated abroad.

There was also among them the daughter of one of the Dieppe English, a girl who had just passed in the little procession, quite unworthy of the captain's praise, as to not having "cheeks" bursting with health. Her attractions were more refined. She was small in shape and figure, with brown hair, wavy, though rather thin and close to her head, whose pretty shape, however, it showed. The face was long, oval, and narrow; but full of a warm colour. Her eyes were quick and bright, yet became soft at times, and she walked with decision. A more intelligent critic than the captain would have said: "There's a girl of some character, that can think for herself, that has curious ideas, that can turn a pleasant saying; a girl that will not be content to jog through the streets of life in a hack-cab, but will look for her landau and footmen and powder; domestic, but ambitious; affectionate, yet worldly." This would be a fair estimate of Miss Pringle's pupil; and we, too, picking her out from the bouncing girls before and behind her, may whisper that her name is Lucy Dacres, whom her father used to call "the dear girl."

Who could best in the colony fill in the details of that sketch? No one certainly so well as the Mr. West, who had been so contemptuously described by the captain. That gentleman knew the young girl thoroughly; had "travelled over her mind." Any one could point out to us where "M. Vaist," the middle-sized gentleman, with the small, soft, brown beard and moustache, faintly sprinkled with grey, and the quick eyes, lodged with his sister in the Place. For, being a barrister, who, it was said, "has been obliged to abandon good practice at the English bar for certain reasons, you see," he had gained quite a reputation by taking up cases of one or two unhappy English who had

been unjustly dragged before the magistrate by some harpies of the town—widows and maiden ladies—and by his calm and able management had quite confounded the "judge of peace," who, from that time, hated but feared him. To Miss Pringle, of Victoria House Academy, he had given admirable legal advice about recovering her rights from the parents of one of her pupils. (The captain had sneered tremendously. "Nice games, nice games, sir—regular Joe Surface. If I had a daughter, I wouldn't let him into the place. Legal advice, indeed!") None of the refugees, however, dared to be free with him, however they might speculate in private. There was a manner about him and about his cold sister ("she only wants the grey beard, and you'd mistake one for the other," again says Captain Filby)—a marble sort of reserve, with a latent power of attack and injury that was dangerous. Indeed, Mr. Gilbert West made no secret of his bitter contempt and loathing "for the whole crew," their meannesses, their dirty whispering, and degrading pettiness. At least, they seemed to read this in his face and bearing; and he certainly kept himself aloof and superior to them all. That sort of air jars exceedingly. "What the deuce brings him here? Why the deuce does he stay here, if he thinks himself too good for the place?" (That "strengthened" "the deuce" was the popular form of asseveration at Dieppe, and used a hundred times in the day.) "Cock him up, indeed! He daren't go home, the fellow!" Less prejudiced people, however, gave out that his real reason was the health of his sister, who suffered from her nerves, and who somehow found that she had less pain in that place than anywhere else. They had some of the best apartments in the town; in the cheerful Place where a company or so of a regiment came and drummed and glittered in the morning, like the shops opposite where they sold articles of Paris, and over which was Mr. West's apartments. The Grande Rue passed right through the Place, and led a little further on to the port. But now, as the monkeys of the place, the raff of chattering commissioners, touters from Wheeler's, "Le Buff's," and other hotels, the porters with barrows, and the custom-house men hands deep in pockets, are lounging down to the pier, the smoke of the packet having been discerned, a tall gentleman in a white tie comes posting down, as by express, to meet her. A most important person, with whom we have all a good deal to do—Mr. Blacker, secretary to the English church.

Everybody there, French and English, knew Mr. Blacker, the oldest resident, the tall, full-bodied gentleman, a little stooped about the shoulders, and with a round white face, garnished with the true mutton-chop whiskers, and an air as of something to do with a deanery. He carried always a crooked-top cane, which, as he walked, he put through that old-fashioned exercise, now and again flourishing it violently, as though it were a private

catherine-wheel. Uniform was not looked to strictly then; and he sometimes wore a good honest "neckerchief," wound several times about his throat, sometimes a sober-coloured stock. Everybody knew him, except the poor dissenting clergy of the place, the mere French curés, whom he kept at a distance. For it was, of course, considered that the English was the real established church.

CHAPTER II. THE PACKET COMES IN.

It was the custom for the whole community to muster in its strength on "the port," a sort of mall, and see the packet come in. That ceremonial, it would have been imagined, must have grown monotonous from daily repetition; but, on the contrary, it never palled: appetite, as the French gentlemen would have said, only came with eating. The young ladies would no more have missed that *rappel* than they would have missed their "church." Sometimes there were delays, and little English brothers were sent up a certain winding hill, which commanded a good view of the open sea, to try and make out the distant smoke. When they returned with the news, Matilda and Mary put away their work, hurried to their glasses to settle their bonnets, and then repaired slowly across to the *prado*, already crowded. There they carried out, poor souls, the little pattern of home life, the genteel greetings, the surprise, the overjoy, the coquetting with the rather shady cavaliers. All were wisely agreed in carrying out the fiction, which indeed made things more pleasant. And here, as elsewhere, were your desirable men, your "nice people," whom every one ought to know, your select "coterie" which drew a line. The well-to-do and genteel, only birds of passage, would not know the poor and genteel. The latter drew a line between themselves and the "shabby genteel." The shabby genteel would not know the class which the captain spoke familiarly of as "the Raps." Yet there were some mysterious laws in this mixed society. For the "Raps," combined with show and money and agreeable manners, could do more than any of the other classes, and made their way anywhere. There was always a charming family, a quiet, gentlemanly father of military bearing, a wife and nice daughters, whose new arrival Mr. Blacker, who had "just come from calling on them," was heralding about in all excitement, pestering every lady:

"My dear madam, I must make it a point, you will call on them. Most charming people; one of the best of our old English country families."

"Indeed!"

"I have been taking *him* round to the shops. They want looking-glass, carriages, horses—really quite an air about them. Come here *only* for the daughter's health—sent by Sir Duncan Dennison." (What a compliment to the place in that "*only*!") Mr. Blacker was thus impetuous in his trumpeting new comers, every one of whom he took up with enthusiasm, and

nearly every one of whom, become the blackest of his swans, was sure to bring the most awkward result to his predictions. By that time, however, he had grown indifferent, had found swans still more black, and left them to their fate.

They clustered more thickly on that poor promenade. The faded costumes began to gather. There were meetings, great strictness of etiquette in the way of easy salutation and easier conversation. The gentleman in the grey suit, and with the small beard just turning a faint grey, was there, with a lady on his arm—a square-faced woman of about fifty, with a stern and solid brown curl laid on each side of her cheek; yet was not a "dowdy," and wore a handsome shawl, which every one can do, and wore it handsomely, which every one cannot do. She was the bar-rister's sister, with a cold manner, stiff and stern as were her curls, but was believed by a few to have a warm heart. They were standing apart. He was looking out towards the town—towards the Grande Rue, and the sister was glancing towards the packet. "Ah, here she is!" he said at last, as the young girl who had walked last in Miss Pringle's procession came tripping towards them. She gave one hand to each with a smiling and delighted face, her right to Mr. West. "Thank you, oh thank you," she said, earnestly, "for speaking to Miss Pringle. It was such a pleasant surprise, and I felt so miserable when we were passing the port. But I suppose she wished to keep me in suspense, and train us to habits of self-restraint. At the same time, if she had refused, and as I am leaving her—"

"Well," said Mr. West, "what would you have done, now? Let us hear."

"I *think*," said she, seriously, and fixing her eyes on him, "I should have come myself. Oh yes! Why should she restrain me when I wish to meet my dear father. What discipline is there in that, I, the oldest pupil in the school, should wish to know? Will it do me any good?"

She smiled; Miss Margaret West looked grave:

"What is the use of going to school at all then?" she cried.

"Quite right," said West, sarcastically. "I don't believe in schools, for one; but still, poor Pringle means well. If you were to do this, Miss Cobbe and the others would follow suit, and all would become chaos. Ah, here's the packet coming. See how these rude starers are gathering to get good places in the front line. Now, will it bring your father? that is the first question; and has he arranged with the great patron for a seat? that is the second."

The young girl—she was about nineteen—drew her head up in a stately manner, a common motion with her. "And what is the third, and the fourth? You are always doubting," she said, quickly. "That is because you think everything bad in the world. I would much rather think well of the world, and be taken in now and again. I would, indeed."

She said this with an air of defiance. A kind of pained sort of expression came into West's face. His sister turned to him with a look of superior triumph. He answered, gently:

"When you know the world as well as I do, you may change your opinion. Besides, I do not apply this to all—to your father, or yourself, or to any one. The reason I said that was, there are so many chances, so many difficulties, that I would not have you hope too much."

She paused, gave a little stamp of vexation, and an impatient movement of her arm. "Always the way with me. Ungracious, unkind when I don't mean to be so. And to you, my true, dear friend! I could beg your pardon. I would go down here on my knees, if you like. I wouldn't mind these creatures here; indeed I would not. The 'raff,' indeed, as you call them. Say you forgive me, or I'll do it this moment."

She had his hand in both hers. The sister interposed, a little excited, for the girl seemed about doing what she said. "Oh, really; please don't, with all these people about. Such folly!"

He drew his hand quietly away. "Not exactly folly," he said, smiling; "but these creatures would not *quite* understand it."

"But do you forgive me? I talk so lightly. The English master says that I don't know the exact force of English, and don't measure my words. I could not find enough of them to tell you all I feel to you, and your goodness to us, and how much I think of you when I am alone."

The sister turned away impetuously. "The packet must be coming now. They are all going to the end."

"Just look at our friend," said Mr. West, half to himself, "seeking the stray ones of his flock."

Now comes posting down, breaking through the ranks, Mr. Blacker, swinging his stick, his head looking to the right and left, and an air as though he were carrying despatches, or at least an officer of the port. His was a sort of official progress, like a royal personage, dropping a word to each. He had to stop many times, and to return many salutes. To some inferiors he was "short;" but there was one or two, Mr. and Mrs. Freemantle, true people, only there for a fortnight or a month, with whom he could turn back, and smile, and sway forward again, with obsequious homage. The season was well over, and these people, coming home from their travels, had waited at this port to let Mrs. Freemantle refile. She was languid and delicate, and used an eye-glass.

"What a curious set of people!" she said, with an amused air. "Where are they all got from?"

"Heaven knows, Mrs. Freemantle," said Mr. Blacker, repudiating his flock with alacrity. "They send them to us from all quarters; some, my dear madam, the very scourgings of the street. In our season, indeed, we do very well. The nobility come down to us. Princesse de la Tour Caserne is not very long gone, and the Duchesse

Florençay, who indeed did me the honour to come to our English chapel with me, on my arm. My dear Mrs. Freemantle, you must come back to us next year."

The greedy settlers stood in ranks on each side to stare. Not one of the passengers, no matter what his sufferings at the moment, but resented this degradation, being thus butchered to make an English holiday. What rusted coats; what repaired theatrical finery and scraps of fashion, half a dozen years old; what air of "coming on the Prado," and simpering, and greeting, and turning round to walk in line four long. Poor souls! After all, this but the hour's exercise in the prison yard. Now is coming up the packet, turning the corner of the whitewashed piles, with the native porters in blouses, shouting hard, and "hauling in" as if a man-of-war was coming up. It is the old Eagle, corpulent, bulky at its abdomen and paddle-boxes, green all over its bulwarks, a highly fashionable colour—then considered a fine specimen of naval architecture. The English are very strong on the decks. The other English, waiting for their prey, are drawn up in two solid lines. In the foremost rank were Mr. West and the two ladies. They had never been in such a place before, but there were reasons now. The young girl was stretching eagerly forward, her arm in his, which at times, from excitement, she clung to. "I don't see him. No, he's not come. Oh, what shall we do? Why didn't he write? How cruel of him!"

"Hush, hush!" he whispered kindly; "not so loud. Think of the people about us. We can't tell as yet."

"There he is! There he is!" she cried quite loud, and making the "raff" smile. "I see him!"

Already the stream had begun to flow—the long file that only wanted a chain to make them a string of convicts. They looked wretched enough. There were the soldiers on guard, and the gloomy prison into which they passed. And now a tall gentleman with a very shining hat with a "rolling" brim, and set much on the side of his head, a jovial face, and a blue coat with a velvet collar, and curled black moustache, came along the gangway. He held a little black bag in his hand, and was nodding a great many times to his daughter as he came along. In a second she had broken from the line in spite of the sad-looking soldier, had her hands on his shoulders, and had drawn him down to her to cover him with kisses. Mr. Harcourt Daeres protested good humouredly: "Oh, I declare now, Lulu—the dear girl. Easy now. Not before the genteel people; wait till we get home—in the front drawing-room." Indeed, the two lines were smiling, tittering, and laughing loudly, and the soldier put her back. She saw her father looking round, and heard him say, "Where's that colonel gone? in the moon again?" Poor Lulu, now sternly put inside the ropes, was making all manner of affectionate motions to him. But he

was relieved presently, when a handsome, tall, and foreign-looking gentleman, retiring and modest, with his eyes on the ground, followed along the avenue. "Come on, Vivian, my hearty," Lucy heard her father cry with cheerful encouragement, and she gave a little sigh; for she knew this was one of the useful objects of which her father was fond of taking possession, absorbing them, and finding profit in them. The bearing of the stranger made considerable impression on the two lines. He was civilised and shy; "so nice looking"—"quite interesting"—the last of which words made him raise his eyes half shyly, half sadly. They were very deep full black eyes. He had small black moustaches, with his cheeks shaved close. The ladies and gentlemen had an instinct that here was the real stuff—a different texture from their own—and who, alas! it was plain, was not to tarry among them. Captain Filby, who had got a good place in front, shouldering some ladies backs, said half aloud: "See, Dacres has brought over a fowl to truss, a nice fat one, I'll lay you a guinea!" And there was Mr. Dacres coming out the other side of the custom-house, where his Lulu and Mr. West and sister were waiting. He was talking as he came out. "Now, don't think of going on to-night. Wait over to-night. That diligence would kill you; and if you post, there is no hurry. At the Royal they'll take good care of you; I'll give you a card to Le Bœuf. I wish we had a corner to—"

"I think I must go on," said the gentleman, irresolutely. "I have an appointment in Paris, and it is so lonely sitting at the hotels."

"Deuced a bit more lonely than in a coupé, my friend, or—if you like, I'll drop in on you, or else you come up to us. This is the dear girl I was telling you of. Lulu, Colonel Vivian, of the something Foot, I forget what."

The officer drew back, and, taking off his hat, made a very profound bow, with a bright smile.

"Will you come?"

"I am sorry I cannot. When I am returning, I may stay a few days, and then I hope to have an opportunity of improving your acquaintance; and, indeed, if you would be so kind as to come up to-night—"

"Then depend on me, colonel. I'll only just rattle through a cutlet, which I know my Lulu has ready for me—"

"But why hurry?" said the other. "I suppose they will have dinner ready at the Royal, and if you will be kind enough to take share of it—"

"Never say it again, my dear friend. If you go on and order it, I'll step home with these traps."

"Oh, papa, papa," burst out Lucy, in a loud reproach. "The first evening you have come back, and we waiting and expecting you every day; and poor mamma! No, sir; indeed he can't go with you."

"You will excuse me," said the officer, gravely. "I did not know how it was. I am so sorry."

"Oh, my dear sir!" Mr. Dacres struck in, gaily. "You don't take me for one of the domestic birds out and out? My dear Lu, you will have enough of me, never fear. You don't know how long I am going to stay with you. Being a stranger, my dear, a stranger in the land—"

"Very well, papa; do as you like," said Lucy, with a trembling voice: "I'd better go home, then, at once, and tell poor mamma."

"Do, that's a sensible child, and say I'll be home about nine or ten at tea, or a little after."

"Yes, papa," said she, almost sorrowfully, "we know what *that* means."

"You may depend on me, Miss Dacres; for I am as tired myself as he is. But I think, perhaps, it might be better—suppose we say breakfast instead?"

"Well, my dear sir," said the other, with perfect good humour, "if you do like to reconsider your kind offer of hospitality, with all my heart; and I'll relish my little girl's outlet with an uncommon sharp appetite, I can tell you."

This only caused the invitation to be renewed.

"I declare I am getting quite in feather to-night," said Mr. Dacres, rubbing his hands. "Now I tell you—I'll get home, and give my old lady a hug—*her* mamma, I mean. Just take the salt water out of my eye, and slip into a clean linen bag. My Petsy, I declare," he went on to her, in a low voice, "it cuts me to the heart to leave you and mamma to-night; but I have my reasons. I'll tell you about him. Of the two, I'm sure I'd sooner be with you and poor mamma, sitting and chatting there, and telling you all the news and our little stories, dear, and all the fun, you know, I've seen since."

Mr. Dacres's voice assumed a half-plaintive tone as he said this.

"Indeed, I am sure you would," said the young girl, energetically; "and we'll sit up for you."

"That's right, that's my own child. How are you, West? How's old Godspeed getting on? It seems about two years and four months, though I believe it's not quite two months; is it, my child? Ah, colonel, I bet you she's got a bit of a stick at home, like a schoolboy's, with every day notched off, the dear girl. Go on up with that fellow with the cap. He'll show you the way; and I'll be after you. Now, dear."

Mr. West was still standing by, his eyes fixed with disdain or contempt on the handsome face of the officer. His eyes would wander from the face down to his feet and up again.

Mr. Dacres nodded pleasantly, and, with his daughter's arm in his cozily, said, "Come along, West;" and walked slowly on.

"Now," said Lucy, giving a sort of dance to keep up with him—"now, deary, tell me the news—and good news. You never write a line, you know. That, of course, we did not expect."

He laughed. "My dear girl, I only write for money, and to people who *have* money to send, and I knew this place was not exactly the quarter, eh? Well, but how is poor mamma

—the pain in her side, dear? Does she suffer at nights?"

"Shoulder, shoulder, papa! Don't you recollect? Well, but she is dying to know, and so are we all; Mr. West, too."

"Oh," he said, carelessly, and speaking fast, "about Sir John Trotter and the Seat! Well, to tell you the truth, he behaved so infernal stuck up, and impudent, and patronising—and 'I must have this,' and 'You must do that'—that I declare to you, one fine evening, I turned my back, and told him to take himself and his rotten borough to the deuce. A wretched old Jacobite, and as mad as any hatter that made a headpiece for a Christian."

"Oh, papa," she said, stopping in front of him in the little street, and speaking with deep reproach, and even anger. "You *did* this, and after all your promises and engagements to us, and to Mr. West, who helped you so!"

"Oh, never mind me," said Mr. West, calmly; "I did not expect much more, recollect."

"And what *did* you expect, sir?" said the father, turning on him a little fiercely. "Tell me that, sir. What did you expect?" Then, with a change of tone, "But go along now! Are you both to be down on me in this way? Can I help it? Can the leopard change his spots, or the black his skin? Surely you know Harkey Daeres. Ask them on the western circuit about me; they'll tell you there's not a better man on it. And now I declare, Lulu, it would have rejoiced the cockles of your little heart to see the way they received your poor dad—big wigs, seniors, all! And I had a power to do. The two best cases that turned up. A grand slander case; damages, five thousand. What a burning speech I gave 'em! I have the Liverpool paper here, with full report. Now, wasn't this a deuced deal better than cringing to a dirty mean Scotch baronet for his old borough? No, no. Harcourt Daeres, ma'am, would sooner earn a crust honestly at his profession than have the applause of a British senate purchased by an obsequious sacrifice of principle!"

Mr. West, walking with his eyes on the ground, made an involuntary face to the stones. Lulu smiled, and shook her head.

AMIALE THEODORUS.

THERE is at least one bishop on earth who can derive very little enjoyment from his episcopal position. He is alternately petted and tortured, feasted in a royal palace or immured in a royal prison. He places the crown upon a chief's head, and, by the simple act of anointing another, he deposes the monarch he had consecrated. This is the Abuna, or Coptic bishop of Abyssinia, whose person the Emperor Theodore guards so carefully that he hides him in a dungeon whenever a Ras of more than ordinary spirit or ambition approaches the imperial residence.

To procure the liberation of the English captives in Abyssinia, Doctor Beke proposed that

the English and French governments should recognise Gobazye, hereditary Prince of Lasta, as Emperor of Abyssinia. But to induce the natives to abjure their allegiance to Theodore and transfer their loyalty to Gobazye, the partisanship of the Abuna must be secured. The success of the plan would depend wholly on his consenting to anoint Gobazye as emperor, and actually performing the rite. The moment the Abuna completes the ceremony, the sceptre is believed to fall from the emperor's hands; and even though Theodore by force should retain his throne, the legality and prestige of his power are gone. Theodore seems to have apprehended that the Abuna might be gained over, for either he closes round his prison at Amba Magdala a garrison of six hundred musketeers and one thousand spearmen, or he sweeps the unhappy bishop over steppes and mountains in the midst of his army, and beheads or burns alive any chieftain who contrives to procure a conference with him.

The Abuna is always a foreigner, generally an Egyptian consecrated by the Armenian patriarch at Jerusalem or Constantinople. Although the telegram from Constantinople which announced the liberation of the British captives in Abyssinia is known to be false, it must have been framed by one well acquainted with some incidents curiously illustrative of the intimate connexion existing between the various Coptic tribes and their patriarchs remotely distant. An Armenian sojourning in St. Petersburg, learning that the efforts of the English government to recover the prisoners had failed, spoke strongly of the influence possessed by the Armenian patriarch at Constantinople, and recommended that he should be appealed to. His authority he represented to be paramount over all tribes in his communion. Her Majesty's ambassador at St. Petersburg reported this counsel to Lord Stanley, and the latter, to leave no available means untried before entering upon war, directed Lord Lyons to place himself in communication with the patriarch and obtain his intercession. This patriarch, who styles himself "Βοϋνος, Chief of the Bishops," readily engaged to give all the assistance in his power. As the most effective means of influencing the emperor, the patriarch wrote a pastoral letter, in which he attributes to Theodore all imaginable Christian virtues. The epistle was magnificently illuminated, and Boghos prays that Providence may defend the noble person and royal dignity, for the glory and honour of the Christian religion. He affirms that the justice and clemency of the exalted emperor and all his religious virtues are well known, notwithstanding the distance between the countries of Abyssinia and Constantinople. In the language of a suppliant, he begs for the pardon and "liberation of his majesty's slaves," the English consul and his companions, "who have no refuge or help save in the mercy and clemency of his majesty." He admits the prisoners to be guilty, though he does not specify the charge, and then im-

plores Theodore to pardon them. "The emperor's clemency and mercy," he writes, "would afford much gratification to the whole of our Christian community, and satisfaction to the illustrious British government, whose efforts in the interests of Christianity are well known." The monster, who burns his subjects alive by scores at a time, is appealed to as "the chosen of God, full of all Christian virtues." The good patriarch is but a man, and having a favour to ask, gave himself plenary absolution, no doubt, for addressing thus one whom he knew to be a merciless tyrant.

This pastoral of the Armenian patriarch at Constantinople reached the British consul in Jerusalem towards the close of last March. The consul immediately waited on the Armenian patriarch in the Holy City, who warmly seconded the efforts of his superior. "His eminence" selected Bishop Sihac, whose name is thus written in official documents, and who is his vicar-general, to proceed with a letter from himself to the emperor. This letter was accompanied by presents, consisting of objects from the Holy City, such as crucifixes, rosaries, &c., certain to be held in the highest veneration by the Most Christian King. This letter also was beautifully illuminated, and in reference, it is said, to the condition of the captives, the initial letter represented Christ Bound in Chains. On the 14th of April the vicar-general, Sihac, had reached Cairo on his way to Massowah. He carried with him presents made of olive wood from the Mount of Olives, mother of pearl from Bethlehem, a sceptre made of a bough from Abraham's Oak, and a cross of gold surmounted with diamonds, containing relics venerated by Orientals. The patriarch also sent with his vicar-general a complete and splendid suit of vestments, crosier, prayer-book, communion plate, &c.; so that the patriarch could perform high mass before the king in full canonicals, with sacred accessories from the Holy City. The Jerusalem patriarch knew how to address Theodore in a manner even more calculated to affect him than that adopted by the Constantinopolitan. There was a shadow on Theodore's birth, and rumour said that his mother was little better than a nautch-girl. Theodore's first proclamation denounces this "hellish falsehood," and asserts the purity of the emperor's descent from David. The clever patriarch, with Oriental tact, assures the emperor that he is enchanted to see in the "august person of the emperor the true type of the queen eulogised in Holy Scripture, who was enamoured of the wisdom of Solomon." Prudence compelled him also to admit the guilt of the captives; but he prays his most merciful majesty to look graciously upon the English consul and his companions, and to pardon them for all the faults they may have committed. This appeal is strengthened by assurances of protection and assistance to the Abyssinian residents and pilgrims visiting Jerusalem, an advantage the emperor had previously sought in vain. Thus furnished, the vicar-

general, Sihac, set out from Cairo for Massowah. No authentic information respecting his subsequent progress has reached either the patriarch or the British consul at Jerusalem. What a number of links in this ecclesiastical chain were put in motion by a solitary Armenian wayfarer in St. Petersburg!

The history of the Emperor Theodorus is romantic. He was known, prior to his usurpation of the sovereignty, as Lij Cassai. Being the nephew of the famous Dejas Comfon, and claiming to be a descendant of the old Ethiopic kings, he seems to have formed the design of seizing the throne at an early period. The circumstances then existing in reference to the imperial court favoured him. There was a puppet emperor, named Johnse, and an acting emperor, Ras Ali; the former was satisfied with the possession of the still beautiful mother of Ras Ali, who exercised power over the whole kingdom. Lij Cassai contrived to wed the daughter of Ras Ali, and straightway rebelled against his own father-in-law. This lady, young, beautiful, imperious, and ambitious, like a second Tullia, urged her husband to destroy her father, and obtain the crown she so ardently coveted. Many chiefs in succession were sent against Lij Cassai, but their followers, dazzled by his unlimited promises, and charmed by his insinuating manners, abandoned their own rulers, and ranged themselves under his standard. At last, Ras Ali engaged his opponent in the battle of Amba Chara. He was utterly routed, fled to the Galla country, and, dying soon after of a broken heart, left Lij Cassai undisputed master of Central Abyssinia. Then followed a succession of triumphs. All trembled before the fierce assaults and increasing power of the usurper, until he became sovereign ruler of the whole territory, from Shoa to Matemma, and from Eojam to Hamazin.

To obviate any flaw in his title to the throne, Theodore proclaimed that he was elected emperor by universal suffrage. His first official document, addressed to the French residents in Abyssinia, is intended to remove that imputation upon the respectability of his family which the Patriarch of Jerusalem so adroitly referred to. The document is a curious jumble of references to the historical events recorded in Scripture. It runs thus:—"I, Theodore, created by the Trinity, and made by it an installed servant and prince, to all his children given by God—to all the Franks. By your God, and the God of your friend Theodore, who appeared unto Moses at Sinai and on the Red Sea; who appeared unto Joshua at Jericho; who anointed Saul with the sign of Samuel when he sought the lost asses; who, when Saul left the ways of the Creator, commanded Samuel to anoint David! As Solomon became king, through David, according to the word of the prophet and his father, although Adonias without the will of God, but by the favour of the nation, was proclaimed king by the people; so Solomon begat Menilek of the Queen of Sheba,

and this Menilek became Negus (*i. e.* emperor) of Ethiopia. From Menilek to the dynasty of the Gallas all the Neguses have been buffoons, who asked from God neither genius nor the means of elevating the empire. When God chose me his servant, my compatriots used to say, 'The river is dried up; it no longer remains in its bed;' and they insult me because my mother was poor, and they call me the son of a beggar-woman (she was said to be a vendor of purgative pills); but the Turks recognised the greatness of my father, they whom he had rendered tributary up to the frontiers of Egypt. My father and my mother descended from David and from Solomon; are even of the line of Abraham. My father and my mother! Now those who reproach me with the name of beggar, beg themselves their daily bread. If you meet in your countries some partisan of the brigand Negousie, who presumes to say that this country of Ethiopia is ruled by the son of a beggar, bet with him a fork of gold against a wooden spoon that I, the present emperor that sit upon the throne of my fathers, from Abraham to David, and from David to Faïel; and bring the man here that he may be confronted with me. It is God alone who abases the proud, and raises up the humble." The throne of Solomon is described to have had "two lions beside the steps, and twelve lions upon the one side and on the other upon the six steps." (1 Kings x. 19, 20.) As Solomon's descendant, Theodore has before him two tamed lions, on which he occasionally leans when giving audience, while two others roll upon the carpet before him. The emperor is said to express delight at the terror with which these animals are regarded by those whom he admits to an audience.

The mission of the vicar-general is not without peril. The Pacha of Egypt, anxious to save the Soudan from being plundered, sent as an envoy to him no less a personage than David, the Coptic patriarch of Alexandria, with very valuable presents. Theodore determined to prove to his subjects that he was master even of the church. He would not throw the patriarch into a dungeon, or deprive him of life; but one bright morning the highest dignitary of the Coptic church in Egypt found that during the night his residence had been completely walled round. After a few days' isolation, the terrified old patriarch was glad to obtain liberation by engaging to quit the country at once. But Theodore assumes to be his own pope and patriarch, and, like our Henry the Eighth or the Russian czars, demands that all should admit him to be not only chief in the state, but supreme in religion.

There are twenty-six Europeans connected with Mr. Rassam, and the European workmen, with their wives and children, number thirty-five; there are, therefore, sixty-one souls in the power of Theodoros. Most of the captives were not only "hedged round" and guarded closely, but manacled and chained. When Theodore, for a moment, assented to the liberation of the

prisoners in February last year, the prisoners had endured sixteen months' confinement. On quitting the rocky heights of Amba Magdala, they were compelled to remain two days at the foot of the hill, to regain strength. Several could scarcely stand upright, much less ride any considerable distance. Of late a difference of treatment has been observed towards Mr. Rassam's party and the others; the former are not chained, and, though closely guarded, are permitted to move about the precincts of the prison. The workmen and their families are thrown into the common jail, guarded by two hundred soldiers, and heavily chained. The climate of Abyssinia must be healthy to the acclimatised, for, with the exception of one child, no one among the captives has died. They suffered more or less from "influenza," and other complaints incidental in a changeable climate, but all remained alive.

The emperor has not spared to set forth frequently his charges against the captives. Consul Cameron he imprisons "because he went to the Turks, who do not love the emperor, and before whom he insulted and lowered him." Bardel, a Frenchman, he keeps in chains because "he did not make Theodore acquainted with the Emperor of the French;" and because, in the emperor's court, on being refused release, "he ungirt himself, and covered his head with his robe"—a deadly insult in Abyssinia. The charge against Mr. Kerens is a droll one. He had brought up a carpet of rather a common pattern—a Turk and a Frenchman shooting a lion. The jealous emperor instantly interpreted the pattern as an allegory against himself; the lion represented Abyssinia, France and Turkey were the hunters. The rest of the prisoners are retained "because they abused the emperor; and a friend ought to be a shield to his friend, and the Europeans should have shielded him." After the enjoyment of three days' liberty, the prisoners were seized and immured again, ostensibly because they had not waited on the emperor "to make reconciliation," really because the emperor desired to extort from England a kasa, or ransom, to consist not only of steam-engines, turning-lathes, carpenters' tools, &c., to the value of 3000*l.*, but of gunners, smiths, and an artillery officer. But throughout the imperial correspondence three points are obvious. Ever jealous of the authority claimed by the church, Theodore writes to her Majesty in these terms: "Your Majesty can learn from those who fear the Lord the ill treatment and abuse which we have received at the hands of the Europeans, and the Copt, who called himself Metropolitan, the Abuna Salama." The insults cast upon the memory of his mother, perhaps incautiously repeated by the Europeans, rankled still in the emperor's heart. In his last letter to Mr. Rassam, he writes: "Now, let me prove to you, that though my mother was poor, she was a daughter of the ancient kings of Ethiopia." The kasa is the third object ever in the mind of the king. "What my kasa is I will tell you after-

wards. I don't want either silver or gold. I want people who will open my eyes, because I am blind. The prisoners, however, though pining for freedom, take care to warn all artisans, who might be tempted to accept the offers of the emperor, that they will probably never be permitted to return. The place in which the captives have been so long confined is not of a tempting character. Dr. Beke describes it thus: "Just picture to your imagination an isolated locality, rising out of the midst of a jumble of conical hills, deep ravines, and serrated ridges, and you have Amba Magdala. On the summit there are clusters of thatched huts, occupied by about a thousand troops. Not far from the church, which you recognise by an apex surmounted by a glittering cross, you gaze on a mass of wretched hovels; approach a few steps nearer, and you behold a strong thorn fence, guarded by groups of sooty soldiers, close to whom lie, basking in the sun, bands of unfortunates, loaded with galling chains. This is the Royal Prison."

So long as the Emperor Theodore listened to the counsels of two Englishmen, Messrs. Bell and Plowden, his kingdom flourished, and his subjects, if not altogether happy, were content. He is reported now to indulge in habits of inebriety, and much of his outrageous violence upon his own subjects is accounted for by his fits of delirium tremens. The Abyssinians do not now receive the present usurper as the true Theodore of prophecy, who, they have discovered, is to come from the east: whereas Cassai's native country, Kwara, is in the west. His wonderful success at first cast a veil over this discrepancy; but his tyranny, cruelty, and oppression, so opposed to the attributes of the Christian monarch they hoped for, have gained for him the name of "Pharaoh, king of Egypt;" and his people sigh for some Moses to deliver them out of the hands of the oppressor.

A NORMAN HOSPITAL.

THE quarter of Caen where stands the abbey church of La Trinité has the air of a desert, a ruinous wilderness. It was in the glaring glowing heat of afternoon that we walked up there, and to leave the harvest sunshine for the cool shade of the magnificent nave was like passing from purgatory into paradise. But not a soul was there. It was hushed as a grave. The echo of our footfall was the only sound.

Beyond the nave we could not pass alone, for the sanctuary is closed to the world and consecrated to the service of a little community of Augustines, cloistered nuns who are the nurses of the sick at the Hôtel Dieu, hard by the church. To such use has come at last the rich endowment of Matilda—to such good use! The church is all that is left of her primitive foundation—a noble and beautiful church, fit to match with St. Etienne, as she with its builder. Her bones lie in a twice-violated grave, under a

white stone sarcophagus, in the sanctuary where the nuns meet to pray. "She loved piety, she comforted the poor, and, poor herself, was never rich but to distribute of her treasures to the needy. For this behaviour, on the first day of November, after six o'clock of the morning, she went to enjoy life eternal." This is her memorial as we read it now, and contemporary chroniclers tell us besides that she was a noble lady of high courage, and that the Conqueror never loved lady but her, his faithful wife and helpmate.

Sentinels keep the gates of the Hôtel Dieu and the cloistered ladies, and, on applying there, we were admitted to view all that the nuns can never leave. We met two in the arcade leading to the hospital—tall, capable, mature women, in the imposing white dress of their order—one with a vast bunch of keys at her girdle, the other with a ledger in her hands; for these nuns work as hard as they pray. A light-footed cheerful little laundress acted as our guide, first to the choir, whispering to us by the way that we had come at a good hour, for we should see the nuns at prayers. And so she brought us to the grille, and held aside the crimson curtain for us to look through; but only two or three were come in, and we went to view the crypt below the sanctuary to gain a little time. "When we ascended from the ancient sepulchre, now in process of restoration and full of daylight, we heard the rhythmical murmur of many voices; and when the curtain was put aside again, there were some fifty nuns assembled, each in her stall, reciting the office, led by the prioress and sous-prioress, whose seats were raised above the rest on the upper step of the peristyle. The choir, though small, is unique in its beauty amongst the old Norman churches, and we were allowed long enough to study it; to see the faded fresco of the ceiling, the monument of Matilda, and, if we pleased, to decipher the countenances of the praying nuns. We were told that amongst them are many women of distinction, but none looked young under the spreading coil and veil. Conspicuous in contrast with the white robes of the professed ladies was one in the habit of the world—a postulant preparing for her vows; for none enter here without serving a severe probation to try them whether they are fit by strength of heart and body for the life of labour, watching, and prayer which all must follow who join the community.

From the church we were conducted to the great salle of the sick women—a vast lofty gallery with windows at each side, and, on the shady side, wide open to the air. On the sunny side the shutters were all closed, and the atmosphere was perfectly cool and fresh. The beds stood far apart and were exquisitely clean, and the sick faces on the pillows looked all as calm as pain would let them. A group of three convalescent patients at work, lace-making, by a window that commanded a view of a green court, arrested us for a little talk. A girl of eleven or twelve was sitting by them, with shadowy folded hands and a countenance full of

the sad patience of long anguish. We asked her if she was recovering. "Oh no," she said. "Je souffre partout—I suffer all over." And one of the women added, pathetically, "Poor child! she suffers so much!"

At the further end of the *salle* were two white-curtained beds, empty, and our brisk little guide told us that sometimes persons who required special care, and could not have it in their own homes, came to the hospital to be nursed by the nuns. Such persons pay a little pension, and occupy these curtained beds, or, if their case require it, have a private room. On leaving the great *salle* we passed two or three smaller wards of which the doors stood open, and which had each a few occupants; but these we were not invited to enter, and our guide led us on to the children's nursery. There were but three in-doors—one a baby newly-born that day, who, with her mother, would be transferred to the general hospital of St. Louis at the end of fifteen days, if both were well enough; another, a four-months-old boy, fatherless and motherless; and the third, a little maid of three years, strong enough on her feet, after the measles, to make us a dot of a curtsy and say, "Bon jour, mesdames," at the bidding of the *bonne* in charge—a kind, chatty, motherly body, not a nun.

There are many more men than women at the *Hôtel Dieu*; because the invalid soldiers are nursed there—and very good and comfortable the nursing must be. "Night and day," said our guide, "the ladies watch and tend the sick; the work is very hard, and it afflicts the heart to see them suffer; but the good God gives them that vocation, and they are happy. They are not to be pitied; oh no! they are not to be pitied."

We were introduced to the kitchen just at the crisis when dinner was being served up. Such a kitchen! such a dinner! such vast joints of beef and mutton, such excellent smells, such a fervent heat! There was a nun superintending the business, and our guide venturing on the liberty of opening an oven door to show us its extent, was routed by a warm cook with a long ladle; and beckoning to us, with a shrug of her shoulders, trotted off laughing. It was not the best moment for visiting the kitchen apparently, and all was at such a glow we did not envy those we left there.

From the kitchen we went to the linen-room, cool as that was hot, and arranged with an admirable precision; and from the linen-room to the pharmacy. Then we left the house, and crossed the green court where were several convalescent men, and a little boy who ran away, and would not stand and say "Bon jour, mesdames," even at the command of a pallid, dark-eyed youth, who stretched out a languid arm to catch him, but fell short of success by an inch or two, which he was over-feeble and listless to retrieve. From the shady green court we passed into the park where cows were feeding, and a nun walking under the trees in company with a woman and a little girl,

well enough to play out of doors. And then we ascended to The Point of View, a conical hill cut in terraces spirally, from the top of which we overlooked the town, with its fine spires of St. Pierre, St. Etienne, and St. Sauveur, the river and the distant levels of this monotonous rich country, where the roads run straight as rulers, and the fields are divided by dykes for hedges. We overlooked, too, a triangular bit of ground enclosed in high walls, and waving with long rank grass—the burial-place of the nuns, who lie there without name, or stone, or any memorial; all the vanities of the world left behind them at the gate of the sanctuary.

What a change, what a difference, between the yesterday and to-day of the famous *Abbaye-aux-Dames* at Caen! The first nun who took the vows there was Cécile, a daughter of the Conqueror and his wife; and the abbess, named Matilda, after the royal foundress, assumed the title of *Madame* of Caen, which her successors perpetuated. On the day of Holy Trinity her arms were set up over the town gates, and all the tolls were paid to her officers, who rode in state through the streets, as if in assertion of her lordship. The abbey was richly endowed at its foundation, and received large subsequent additions to its revenues. Ladies of rank entered into its gay seclusion, received visits from their friends, corresponded in Latin with the canons of Bayeux, loved literature, wrote verses, and took part in all the religious processions of the town. The abbess had her country-house at Ouistreham by the sea, and went over often to England to look after her lands and estates there. These high-born dames renounced neither the world nor the flesh in making themselves nuns, and the grille was not so fast shut but that the devil got in amongst them occasionally too. Wild spirits, whom veil and vows could not chasten, varied the canticles of the day by the introduction of witty, wicked rilleries and jests on the mysteries of the faith. Councils rebuked in vain the license of the ladies' tongues, and in the sixteenth century it became necessary to impose a thorough reform on the convent. About the same epoch the Calvinists also reformed it in their destructive fashion, and flung out the bones of Matilda from her grave. But the abbess, Anne de Montmorency, piously gathered them up, and restored them to their stone coffin, where they lay until the revolutionists cast them forth again in 1793. Once more they were re-buried, and the sarcophagus with ancient brass that now covers them, was raised in the sanctuary to mark the last place of their rest.

The abbey was suppressed by the Constitutional Assembly in 1790, and remained void until the establishment of the *Hôtel Dieu* was transferred thither from the *Ile St. Jean*, where it had existed for six hundred years—an excellent choice of locality for the sick, but the lovers of antiquity regret the destruction of the ancient hospital, which took place immediately it was vacated; and even more the necessary

additions to the abbey, for the making of which were demolished the old entrance gate, and a vast building of Norman architecture that went by the name of Queen Matilda's Palace. "The old order passeth, making way for new;" but the new, if more useful than the old, is certainly much less beautiful to the eye that cherishes carven stone and wood above humanity. Ruin is ruin in Caen, and not well kept; and many think Vandalism is at its best when it leaves it so, and suffers time and decay to do their work.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

THE RED BARN.

On Friday, the 18th of May, 1827, Maria Marten, the daughter of a mole-catcher living at Polstead, a small retired village in the county of Suffolk, prepared to set out to drive to Ipswich, twelve miles distant, with her lover, a farmer's son, named Corder, who, after many delays and subterfuges, had agreed to marry her. The girl, pretty and thoughtless, had not maintained a very good character in the place.

The marriage had been fixed for the Monday, but Stoke Fair had detained Corder on that day; and on Thursday his brother James had been taken dangerously ill. Such, at least, were the excuses that Corder offered Maria Marten for not keeping his promise. The girl and her mother were up-stairs in their cottage when Corder came on the Friday, and abruptly proposed to instantly start for Ipswich, as he had got the licence all ready.

"Come, Maria," he said, "make haste; I am going."

The girl looked round surprised at the sudden decision and peremptory tone, and replied:

"How can I go at this time of the day, without anybody seeing me?"

But Corder was in no mood for waiting, and he answered moodily:

"Never mind, you have been disappointed many times, and shan't be again; we will go now."

"How am I to go, William?" was the girl's next question.

"You can go up," he said, "to the Red Barn, and stop till I come to you with my horse and gig."

The girl was still full of objections. The marriage was to be a clandestine one, and yet her lover was going to drive her to Ipswich in open daylight.

"I'm not ready," she said; "and how am I to order my things?"

He was ready to answer every objection. "I will take the things," he said, "in a bag, and carry them up to the barn, and then I'll come back and walk with you."

She still disliked the suddenness of the departure.

"There are none of my workmen about," he said, "in the fields or near the barn, and I am sure the coast is quite clear."

How carefully he had foreseen every difficulty! how prompt he was to remove every lingering obstacle to their immediate marriage! The old father and mother were not the sort of people to oppose the will of their master, their daughter's rich lover. They made no objection. Maria then put up her things—a black silk gown, black silk stockings, a Leghorn hat, and some other small necessities, all tucked into a wicker basket and a large black velvet reticule. There had been, probably, some previous arrangement between the lovers; for Maria now produced from some secret nook a bundle of men's clothes. These she was to put on while Corder was carrying the basket and reticule in a brown holland bag to the Red Barn. Corder then left with the bag, and Maria, crying all the time, proceeded to put on her disguise—blue trousers, a striped waistcoat, and brown coat. She wore a man's hat over her three large hair-combs, and a red and yellow silk handkerchief to muffle her chin and long earrings. She had in her hand a large green cotton umbrella, with a bone handle. While Maria was still dressing, stopping every now and then to cry at the suddenness of her departure, Corder returned, carrying a gun. Maria's mother asked if it was charged, and on being told that it was, she said:

"Then I'll move it away, on account of the child."

This was Corder's child, for whom he had just paid the weekly allowance. Corder then sat down by the fire, and drawing out a pair of pistols, snapped them several times. (It was not so unusual to go armed in 1827 as it is now.) He then looked up, and said to Mrs. Marten:

"Mrs. Marten, the reason I go to Ipswich to-day is because John Balaam, the constable, came into the stable to me this morning, and told me that he had got a letter from Mr. Whitmore, from London. In this letter there was a warrant to have Maria taken up and prosecuted for our illegitimate child."

"Oh, William!" the poor mother answered, reproachfully, "if you had but married Maria before the child was born, all this would have been settled."

"Mrs. Marten," was the conciliatory reply, "don't make yourself at all uneasy, for I'm going to Ipswich to-day to get a licence to be married to-morrow morning."

On the Sunday before, he had told Maria's mother that he already had the licence, but had been obliged to send it to London to a friend.

The mother was still anxious.

"William," she asked, "what will you do if she can't be married?"

"She shall be my lawful wife before I return home."

The mother repeated:

"But if you *can't* be married?"

Corder replied:

"Then I'll get her a place somewhere till such time as we *can* be married."

Just then Maria came down, still anxious and crying. Corder took a paper of ham out

of his pocket and gave her some to eat. The girl asked her stepmother to go out into the yard, and see if there was any one near who might observe her leaving. But there was no one; so the lovers stole out of the house, after Maria had kissed and shaken hands with her stepmother, her sister Ann, and her step-brother, a little boy of ten. Anna had often quarrelled with her sister—jealous of her dress and of her lover—but she forgot all that in the sorrow of that sudden parting. The lovers left about half-past twelve, stealthily by different doors; she by the back door, the field, and the fen; he by the door opening on the road. They met in the road; the stepmother saw them meet; they both got over a gate and went across the Hare-hill field, past the hedges already in bud, in the direction of the Red Barn, which was two fields distant, and where Maria's things in the brown holland bag had been left by Corder. The disguised girl, still in tears, and the sullen lover, with the odious, sly, malign face, disappeared in the distance, where the green boughs grew greyer and fainter towards the low horizon.

Yet it was a singular thing, too, that little George, out in the fields that very day that William and Maria drove to Ipswich to get married, ran in from play about four o'clock, declaring he had just seen William in a velvet jacket, and carrying a pickaxe on his shoulder. He seemed going home over the corner of Brandfield, and went down the Thistly-lane close to the Red Barn. The boy had good eyes, and was not twenty rods off; it scarcely seemed likely that he could be mistaken.

On Saturday, Maria's stepmother saw Corder; he was in his sick brother's room, and she did not speak to him. On Monday he came to the Martens' house about nine in the morning, and the first question of course was:

"Well, William, what have you done with Maria?"

He replied:

"I have left her at Ipswich. I have got her a comfortable place. She is going down with Miss Rowland to the water-side."

The woman's motherly anxiety was again busy.

"Why, William," she said, "what will she do for clothes?"

Corder replied:

"Miss Rowland has got plenty, and would not let me send for any." He added: "I have got a licence, but it must go to London to be signed, so I cannot marry until a month or six weeks; but I have changed a cheque for twenty pounds, and given her the money."

The conversation continued:

"Which way did you go?"

"By Stratford."

"Where did she dress?"

"She put her things on in the barn, and threw the great-coat over them to hide her till she could get into a by-lane. The great-coat and hat were tucked into the seat of the box, and she put her own hat on."

One day, a week after, Mrs. Marten confronted Corder with what the boy had told her, wishing him to explain the strange delay. "George saw you go down the Thistly-lane with a pickaxe on your shoulder."

"Indeed that was not me," was the ready explanation; "that was Tom Acres, who was planting trees on Mr. Hoy's hill."

There was, of course, an end of the matter.

On the 17th of July, 1827, at Polstead Fair time, Corder's brother James died. Mrs. Marten was at the funeral, and observed that William Corder had Maria's umbrella in his hand. She said to Corder afterwards:

"Why, William, you had got Maria's umbrella at your brother James's funeral."

He immediately said: "It was not hers, but one belonging to Deborah Pryke, and like hers."

She afterwards again recognised it, and Corder then said he had been over to Ipswich to see Maria, and she had lent it him, as it rained hard. This was natural enough, and yet it was singular his denying the umbrella to be Maria's at first.

From July to September Corder strolled into the Martens' just as usual, on his way to market or shooting, or from his fields and barn. Sometimes he came two or three times a day. He described Maria to the old people as "purely well," and said that at Michaelmas he should bring her home to his farm. It was odd, however, that Maria never wrote to her father, stepmother, nor sister; but Corder explained that she had an obstinate gathering on her hand, and that prevented her.

About this time, Mr. Peter Mathews, Maria's former lover, came on a visit to Polstead, and had several interviews with Corder, being anxious about a letter he (Mathews) had posted to Maria on the 3rd of January, 1827, and in which he had enclosed five pounds. Mr. Mathews left Polstead on the 9th of August. On that day, Corder told Mr. Mathews that he had received a letter from him to Maria, but did not know where to forward it. He thought she was somewhere near Yarmouth. There was some concealment. Mr. Mathews grew angry, and told Corder that he was deceiving him, and that the letter must be forwarded. Corder promised to do his best, and they parted.

Now this statement that Maria was then near Yarmouth could not have been true, because, one day in May, Corder had called at the house of a labourer named Stow, who lived at the nearest cottage to the Red Barn, and borrowed an old spade of the man's wife, at the same time naming another place as Maria's residence, so near that he could see her any day he liked.

On August the 26th, Corder wrote a letter to Mr. Mathews, and told him that Maria was at Herlingbury, near Yarmouth, but that the gathering on her hand still prevented her writing. The letter concluded thus:

"P.S. I have already enclosed your letter for Maria in one of my own, which I shall post with this immediately, and beg permission to add that I have fully determined to make Maria

my bride directly. I can settle our family affairs, which will be in about a month or six weeks' time. Till that time, Maria wishes to continue with my kindred. In concluding, if I can at any time render you any service whatsoever, I shall be most happy to oblige, as I am truly sensible of your generosity."

On the 8th of September, a farmer named Pryke drove Corder to Colchester. On the road they talked of farming, and of Maria, of whom Corder spoke with great affection, but said he had not seen her since May. That was odd, too, for had he not told Mr. Mathews he had seen her in August at Herlingbury, and Mrs. Stow that he could see her any day he liked? On the 17th September, Corder called at the Martens', and told Mrs. Marten he was going to the water-side for his health, and that he should call at Yarmouth and bring Maria with him to be married at Ipswich. On October 18th, Marten, the old mole-catcher of Polstead, received a hearty, affectionate letter from Corder, dated from the Bull Inn, Leadenhall-street, London. He and Maria were married at last. The letter began in the following way:

"Thomas Marten. I am just arrived at London upon business respecting our family affairs, and am writing to you before I take the least refreshment, because I shall be in time for this night's post, as my stay in town will be short, anxious to return again to her who is now my wife, and with whom I shall be the happiest of men. I should have had her with me, but it was her wish to stay at our lodging at Newport, in the Isle of Wight, which she described to you in her letter: and we feel astonished that you have not yet answered it, thinking illness must have been the cause. In that she gave you a full description of our marriage, and that Mr. Rowland was daddy, and Miss R. bride's-maid. Likewise told you they came with us as far as London, where we continued together very comfortable for three days, when we parted with the greatest regret. Maria and myself went on to the Isle of Wight, and they both returned home. I told Maria I should write to you directly I reached London, who is very anxious to hear from you, fearing some strange reason is the cause of your not writing."

Corder then expressed his intention of immediately taking a farm in the Isle of Wight. The letter concluded with the following sentence:

"I think you had better burn all letters, after taking all directions, that nobody may form the least idea of our residence. Adieu."

On the 23rd, Corder wrote again, in answer to a letter from old Marten expressing surprise at never having received Maria's letter. He said:

"I have this day been to the General Post Office, making inquiry about the letter Maria wrote you on the 30th of September, which you say never came to your hands. The clerk of the office traced the books back to the day it was wrote, and he said a letter, directed as I told him to you, never came through their

office, which, I think, is very strange. However, I am determined to find out how it was lost, if possible; but I must think coming over the water to Portsmouth, which I will inquire about to-morrow, when I hope to find out the mystery. It is, I think, very odd that letters should be lost in this strange way. Was it not for the discovery of our residence, I would certainly indict the Post Office; but I cannot do that without making our appearance at a court-martial, which would be very unpleasant to us both. You wish for us to come to Polstead, which we should be very happy to do, but you are not aware of the danger. You may depend, if ever we fall into Mr. P.'s hands, the consequence would prove fatal; therefore, should he write to you, or should he come to Polstead, you must tell him you have not the least knowledge of us, but you think we are gone into some foreign part."

The most remarkable sequel to these letters was, that Corder never returned to the Isle of Wight, in spite of all his protests. A month later, Mr. Mathews ran against him by accident near Somerset House. He said Maria was at the Isle of Wight—they were *not* married—he was waiting to settle his family affairs. He had forwarded her the letter of Mr. Mathews. Mathews then told him that Maria's father was very uneasy about her, not knowing where she was, and had written once or twice to him, Mathews, about her. There was a great entanglement of lies somewhere.

Very soon after this, in December, Corder inserted the following hypocritical and impudent advertisement in the *Morning Herald*:

"A private gentleman, aged twenty-four, entirely independent, whose disposition is not to be exceeded, has lately lost chief of his family by the hand of Providence, which has occasioned discord among the remainder, under circumstances the most disagreeable to relate. To any female of respectability, who would study for domestic comfort, and is willing to confide her future happiness to one in every way qualified to render the marriage state desirable, as the advertiser is in affluence. Many happy marriages have taken place through means similar to this now resorted to. It is hoped no one will answer this through impertinent curiosity; but should this meet the eye of any agreeable lady, who feels desirous of meeting with a sociable, tender, kind, and sympathising companion, they will find this advertisement worthy of notice. Honour and secrecy may be relied on. As some little security against idle application, it is requisite that letters may be addressed, post-paid, A. Z., care of Mr. Foster, stationer, 68, Leadenhall-street, with real name and address, which will meet with most respectful attention."

Corder received fifty-three answers, some from servants, others from distressed ladies of ambiguous antecedents, dilating on their various mental qualifications, their beauty, and their favourable disposition to matrimony. One letter was from a lady who, as he said, kept her

carriage, and was living in a sphere very superior to his. She requested him to attend at a certain church at a certain hour, having one arm in a sling, and wearing a black handkerchief. She described the carriage in which she would come, and directed him to go to a certain pew in the church where he might be opposite to her, and they might have a view of each other during the service. He mistook the hour, however, and when he went to the church he found that the service was over.

A lady who kept the Grove House Academy, in Brentford-lane, Ealing, near London, then wrote to him; he saw her, liked her, and married her within the week. She proved a worthy, religious woman, and to the very last watched and served him with the most faithful love. When they parted for the last time, Corder said to her:

"I hope you will not marry again; and, above all, not marry in a similar way: *it is a most dangerous way of getting a husband.*"

While in Ealing, Corder lived in seclusion, seldom going out of his own premises, and never to church, though his wife took her pupils there every Sunday. He was, however, compelled to once or twice visit London, on matters connected with the school. On these occasions he always went armed with pistols (in case of footpads, as he told his wife), and usually took the long path that used to lead from the small lane off the Oxford-road at Turnham-green, by the Woolpack public-house, through the fields, to Ealing churchyard and Brentford-lane. He soon began to disagree with Mrs. Moore, his wife's mother, who lived with them, and accused her of trying to wean his wife's affections from him.

On the 19th of April, 1828, an event, however, happened at Polstead that somewhat disturbed Corder's matrimonial happiness and his quiet mode of life at the Ealing school. Two or three times since Maria's departure with Corder, her stepmother, the mole-catcher's wife, had dreamed that the poor girl had been murdered, and her body hid in the right-hand bay of the Red Barn. Spiritualists, who are fond of distorting the simplest dreams into supernatural revelations, profess to be astonished, even up to the present time, by the recurrence of this dream, which was merely the return, at night, of the ever-recurring suspicions of the day. To invest such an occurrence with an atmosphere of the supernatural is a mischievous crab-like attempt to return to the superstition and debasement of the middle ages. The suspicion of the whole family of the Martens had rested on the Red Barn from the first alarm at Maria's mysterious silence. The barn had only two bays. If the body was there, it was as likely to be in the right as the left bay. It was very natural that on the third or fourth recurrence of the dream, the old mole-catcher should resolve to ask Mrs. Corder's bailiff to allow him to search the Red Barn, to see if there was anything in his wife's dream after all.

The Red Barn, so long the nightmare of the Martens and their shuddering thought by day and night, was a long, partly tiled wheat-barn, divided into two bays or divisions for corn, having between them the usual planked floor for thrashing, and on to which, at harvest-time, the loaded waggons could be driven, when the wide folding-doors on either side were thrown open. There was a tiled chaff-house on one side of the barn, and behind it a projecting lean-to. There was a farm-yard round it, and at the back of this a long thatched shed to shelter cattle in wet weather. A gate at the end of the yard divided the thatched shed in two. The barn seems to have originally derived its name merely from its red tiles; tiling being less frequent than thatch in that part of the country.

All persons who know the country will remember such barns as the one we have described. The yard was heaped with black trampled straw. It was a lonely place when the flail was not thumping on the thrashing-floor. When the cattle were out in the fields, there would be no sound to break the oppressive silence but the chirping of a thievish sparrow or two on the tiles, and the buzz of the large orange-banded bees on the flowers of the rank nettles that covered last year's dry dunghills.

There was no flail sounding merrily on that 19th of April, a year all but a month since Corder and Maria had been seen crossing the fields towards the Red Barn. Pryke, Mrs. Corder's bailiff, unlocked the door and went in first. The bays were covered with litter too thick for any examination of the floor. The bailiff therefore pushed the straw back from the right-hand bay (the scene of the dream) with a rake and a hayfork. On the floor of the bay they found some large stones, and the earth beneath looked loose. Marten then poked the earth with the handle of his rake and a mole-pike he had with him, and then removed it. To their horror, when they tried the iron again, they turned up something black—evidently part of a murdered body, and in that ghastly silence they dared not search further. So they went to get help, but first locked the door behind them cautiously, taking the key with them. Marten remained, wandering about the barn and searching and moaning for two hours, and then went home to tell his wife. He then returned with Pryke and another man, and they dug down a foot and a half for the body. They at once knew it to be Maria's, defaced as it was. Round the neck was a green handkerchief, pulled so tight that it had made a deep groove in the flesh. A bullet had passed through the left cheek. There was a stab in the neck, one in the right eye, and one through the apex of the heart. The body was recognised by the half-decayed clothes, which were stained with blood. The dreadful dream had come true at last, and it must have been done by Corder.

On the 22nd of April, about ten o'clock in the morning, a grave, hard-looking man knocked at the door of Grove House, Ealing. As the

man entered the hall, Corder came out of the parlour. What then happened the grave man shall himself tell :

"I told him I had a little business with him. Prisoner said, 'Walk into the drawing-room,' and we went in. I then told him I was an officer, and was come to apprehend him on a very serious charge, and he must consider himself my prisoner. He replied, 'Very well.' I told him the charge was respecting a young woman of the name of Maria Marten, whom he had formerly kept company with. I said she had been missing for a length of time, and strong suspicions were attached to him. I continued : 'I believe you know such a person?' It was a young woman you kept company with in Suffolk." He said no; he did not know such a person. I asked him, 'Did you never know such a person?' He said no; I must have made a mistake; he was not the person I wanted. I said, 'No; I have not made a mistake—your name is Corder;' and I am certain he was the person. I told him to recollect himself; I had asked him twice if he knew such a person, and I would ask him a third time. He still said no, he did not; he never knew such a person. I then proceeded to search him, and took from his pocket a bunch of keys. I then took him to the Red Lion at Brentford. On our way thither, I said the body of the young woman had been found in his Red Barn. He made no remark then. We proceeded some distance, and he asked me, 'When was the young woman found?' I told him, 'On Saturday morning last.' He made no further reply."

A pair of pistols were found in a black velvet bag that hung on a nail in Corder's dressing-room. A gunmaker at Sudbury remembered repairing these in February, 1827. There was also found a short, very sharp, crescent-shaped sword, which Corder was proved to have taken to a cutler at Hadleigh, in May, 1827, to be ground as sharp as a carving-knife. There were now ominous-looking rust-spots and scratches on it.

The murderer was tried at Bury St. Edmund's, August 6, 1828. The crowd was so enormous, that the counsel and officers of the court had to fight their way to their places. Corder appeared in court dressed in a new suit of black, and with his hair combed over his forehead. He was twenty-four years of age; the girl he murdered twenty-seven. There was a sulky, ill-tempered, yet smirking expression about his face, and he seemed to be vain of a pair of blue French spectacles which he wore. He was, at first, calm and unconcerned, and busied himself writing notes to his counsel, and eyeing the witnesses smilingly through the pitiable disguise of his spectacles. Towards the end of the day, however, he seemed to lose confidence, and the heavy fixedness of his eyes gave way to occasional convulsions of involuntary motion.

On the renewal of the trial the next day, the prisoner appeared jaunty, cool, hardened, and

composed, until Mr. Lawton, the surgeon, produced the skull of the murdered girl in court, and proceeded to show with a quill how the sword found at Ealing fitted the wound in the orbit of the eye.

During this re-examination of Mr. Lawton, the prisoner, who had taken off his spectacles, replaced them, and beheld attentively this painful spectacle. He inclined his body forward, so as to command a full view of the skull; but as if the effort to sustain his attitude and evince this expression had become too great for his nerves, he suddenly flung his back against the pillar, hastily drew off his spectacles, and evidently laboured under the strongest emotion. In a few moments, however, he rallied, replaced his glasses, took out his pocket-book, and quickly wrote a memorandum to his leading counsel, Mr. Brodrick, who at once wrote a reply, which the prisoner read with close attention, and, on the signification of a movement from the learned counsel, tore into the smallest fragments. His solicitor at the same time went to the front of the dock and had a long consultation with him.

The prisoner being called on for his defence, advanced to the front of the bar, took out some papers, and read his address to the court from a thick copy-book.

He commenced by referring to the hardship sustained by prisoners in his situation in not being allowed the aid of counsel in their address to the jury. He also complained of the partial conduct of the coroner, and entreated the court to dismiss from their minds everything they had heard of a nature to prejudge his cause. He then proceeded to the nucleus of the case, stating that when he and the victim reached the Red Barn, she, while changing her dress, flew into a desperate passion, and upbraided him with not having so much regard for her as a gentleman who had been previously alluded to. "Feeling myself in this manner so much insulted and irritated, when I was about to perform every kindness and reparation, I said, 'Maria, if you go on in this way before marriage, what have I to expect after? I shall therefore stop when I can; I will return straight home, and you can do what you like, and act just as you think proper.' I said I would not marry her. In consequence of this, I retired from her, when I immediately heard the report of a gun or pistol, and running back, I found the unhappy girl weltering on the ground. Recovering from my stupor, I thought to have left the spot; but I endeavoured to raise her from the ground, but found her entirely lifeless. To my horror, I discovered the pistol was one of my own she had privately taken from my bedroom. There she lay, killed by one of my own pistols, and I the only being by! My faculties were suspended. I knew not what to do. The instant the mischief happened, I thought to have made it public; but this would have added to the suspicion, and I then resolved to conceal her death. I then buried her in the best way I

could. I tried to conceal the fact as well as I could, giving sometimes one reason for her absence, and sometimes another."

The prisoner delivered the address written for him in a diffident, distrustful way, and in a whining, canting voice: He at first attempted to recite it, but failed; he stammered over several words, and confused the sentences in an ignorant manner. He occasionally fixed his eyes on the jury to try and discover if he had made any effect. The reading took about twenty-five minutes. The jury were absent about half an hour, and returned with the verdict of Guilty.

During the judge's address to the jury, the countenance of the prisoner repeatedly changed colour, from a deep red flush to a pallid hue; he betrayed a very feverish anxiety as to the result of the trial, and appeared to be suffering much mental torture. Occasionally there was a convulsive motion of the lower part of his face; his lips were parched, and he sighed deeply. Towards the conclusion of the trial he rested his head against a pillar in the felons' dock, and closed his eyes.

On hearing the sentence, the murderer sank down in a state of intense agony. Seeming inclined to faint, he was removed into a small cell behind the dock. There he let fall his handkerchief on a table, pressed his face down upon it, and then, with his arms folded round his head, remained in a state of syncope. A more miserable picture of guilt and despair, without any real penitence for the crime, poor humanity had never surely presented.

In prison, Corder slept soundly. In the jail chapel, when he first entered the condemned pew, he wept convulsively for the first time. He still refused to make a full confession.

"The sermons," said he, "which have been put into my hands since I came into this place have convinced me that all confession which it is necessary for me to make is a confession to my God of the transgressions of my life; confession to man can be of no good to my soul; I do not like it, and I will not make it, as it savours strongly of popedom." To another person he said, "Why should I disgrace my family by confessing all the follies and transgressions of my youth; they are, indeed, manifold; the confession would hurt their feelings, and would do me no good."

He refused to see any Methodist preacher. It was only after great difficulty that Mr. Orridge, the governor of the jail, persuaded Corder to make a confession, and not let Maria Marten's memory be stained by the accusation of her having committed suicide. A little before midnight he suddenly said to the governor, "I am a guilty man!" but he would not enter into any full detail. The following was the confession:

"Bury Jail, Aug. 10, 1828. Condemned Cell, Sunday Evening, half-past eleven.

"I acknowledge being guilty of the death of poor Maria Marten, by shooting her with a pistol. The particulars are as follows: When we left her father's house, we began quarrelling

about the burial of the child, she apprehending that the place wherein it was deposited would be found out. The quarrel continued for about three-quarters of an hour upon this and about other subjects. A scuffle ensued, and during the scuffle, and at the time I think that she had hold of me, I took the pistol from the side-pocket of my velvetten jacket and fired. She fell, and died in an instant. I never saw even a straggle. I was overwhelmed with agitation and dismay. The body fell near the front doors on the floor of the barn. A vast quantity of blood issued from the wound, and ran on to the floor and through the crevices. Having determined to bury the body in the barn (about two hours after she was dead), I went and borrowed the spade of Mrs. Stow; but before I went there, I dragged the body from the barn into the chaff-house, and locked up the barn. I returned again into the barn and began to dig the hole; but the spade being a bad one, and the earth firm and hard, I was obliged to go home for a pickaxe and a better spade, with which I dug the hole, and then buried the body. I think I dragged the body by the handkerchief that was tied round her neck. It was dark when I finished covering up the body. I went the next day, and washed the blood from off the barn-floor. I declare to Almighty God I had no sharp instrument about me, and that no other wound but the one made by the pistol was inflicted by me. I have been guilty of great idleness, and at times led a dissolute life, but I hope through the mercy of God to be forgiven.

"W. CORDER."

Corder that night again slept soundly.

This murder had excited great and marked interest in Suffolk. The streets had been full of puppet-shows representing the scene of the crime. A Methodist preacher had held forth to five thousand persons in the neighbourhood of the barn. On the Monday of the execution all the workmen in Bury struck work in order to see the execution. As early as nine o'clock upwards of a thousand persons assembled; before twelve, seven thousand had collected. When Corder stood on the scaffold, Mr. Orridge approached the wretch and spoke to him. He (the governor) then advanced to the front of the scaffold, and cried to the people:

"He acknowledges the justice of his sentence, and dies at peace with all mankind."

A magisterial order caused Corder's skeleton to be preserved in the museum of the County Hospital. Shortly before his execution, Corder wrote the following letter to his wife:

"My life's loved Companion. I am now a-going to the fatal scaffold, and I have a lively hope of obtaining mercy and pardon for my numerous offences. May Heaven bless and protect you through this transitory vale of misery, and which, when we meet again, may it be in the regions of everlasting bliss. Adieu, my love, for ever adieu; in less than two hours I hope to be in heaven. My last prayer is, that God will indue you with patience, forti-

tude, and resignation to His will. Rest assured His wise Providence works all things together for good. The awful sentence which has been passed upon me, and which I am now summoned to answer, I confess is very just, and I die in peace with all mankind, truly grateful for the kindnesses I have received from Mr. Orridge, and the religious instruction and consolation from the Rev. Mr. Stocking, who has promised to take my last words to you."

Subsequent disclosures prove this man to have been a scoundrel, blood and bone, and his victim's character not much better. Even at school he had been notorious for stealing, and had bought false keys, with which he could open any boy's trunk he wished to ransack. He confessed to a forgery on a bank, and it was generally supposed he had murdered a child that he, Maria, and the stepmother secretly buried. Whether the deaths of his father and brother were to be attributed in any way to his cruel agency, was never investigated. There can be no doubt he died a liar, for he obstinately persisted he had never used a sword. This was, no doubt, in order to try and prove that the murder was not premeditated, and only the result of a sudden quarrel. The fool forgot that he had been seen snapping his pistol in Marten's cottage the morning of the murder.

The excitement of the crime did not cease with the execution. Melodramas were written upon it, and the Red Barn itself was all but pulled to pieces by curiosity-mongers from London. Phrenologists, rejoicing in a triumph of their young science, announced pompously to the scientific world that in Corder's skull "secretiveness, destructiveness, and philoprogenitiveness were inordinately developed."

MABEL'S PROGRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

CHAPTER VI. HIDING.

IN a miserable bedroom of a miserable tavern in a squalid street on the Surrey side of the river sat two young men. On the dirty table before them was placed a muddy decanter half full of coarse brown brandy, tumblers, and a jug of water. They had been smoking, and the chamber was filled with heavy clouds of tobacco, which hung about the frozy curtains of the bed, and made the already close atmosphere almost insupportably stifling. But, notwithstanding, the one window was closed, and the yellow blind partly drawn down. Of the two occupants of the room, one—a young man with a remarkably handsome dark face—was well and even elegantly dressed; the other, with unbrushed clothes, matted hair, red eyes, and pallid cheeks, appeared the very picture of reckless despondency. He sat with his head bent down and his folded arms resting on the table before him, whilst his companion, leaning back in his chair in an easy nonchalant attitude,

darted a glance at him, from time to time, of mingled impatience and a sort of contemptuous pity. Presently, as the other continued mute and motionless, the handsome young man uttered a sharp ejaculation, and turning irritably in his chair, said, "Well, upon my soul, I do think you're the most ungrateful dhap I ever encountered in the whole course of my life!"

The other looked up at him for an instant, and then dropped his eyes again, with a gloomy knitting of the brows.

"Ungrateful, am I?" he muttered; and, after a minute's pause, added, with a short bitter laugh, "Ungrateful! yes, I'm so surprisingly happy and fortunate, that it is wonderful I'm not grateful. Grateful! who have I got to be grateful to, I should like to know?"

"To me," retorted his companion, coolly. "You are ungrateful to *me*. What you are to anybody else is not my business."

This time the pale young man fixed his eyes upon the other, and kept them steadily bent on him, as he repeated with an elaborate show of profound astonishment, "Ungrateful to *you*?"

The black malignant frown that came over the face of the handsome youth changed its beauty with startling suddenness. He struck his hand—a supple hand with long slender fingers—sharply on the table, and said, with an indescribable coarse insolence of manner, "To *me*? yes; to *me*. Don't try to come any of your stuck-up airs over me, Mr. Walter Charlewood. It won't do. You and I know each other from old times. Why, who is it that's providing you with food and shelter at this moment?"

"You lent me a trifling sum that I asked for, I don't deny it. But you've had fifty times as much from me before now."

"You have a pretty good cheek, my friend, to talk in that manner. It runs in your family, I suppose. How stands the case? Long ago—or, at least, it seems long ago, now, so much has happened since then—and when you had never known what it was to want a pound, whilst I had practical experience now and then of wanting a dinner, chance brought you in my way, or brought me in your way, if you like that better. You and your friends thought yourselves very high and mighty personages, no doubt, and looked down upon the poor devil of a fiddler from a great elevation."

"Was I ever arrogant? Did I ever show that I looked down upon you?"

"You were the best of the lot, or I shouldn't be sitting here now; but there were other members of your family who—ah! never mind that just now. Your particular pal, Arthur Skidley, tried to be saucy to me; but I cured him of that, I fancy. You played billiards. I played better, and told you so, fairly. Skidley's set had flattered you up for their own purposes—don't interrupt, I know what I'm saying—and you didn't believe me. The consequence was, that you got into my debt for a pretty considerable sum of money."

"Which was paid," cried Walter, excitedly, "which was paid to the uttermost farthing!"

"It was; but not until after a considerable delay that was highly inconvenient to me. However, I waited patiently, because you begged and prayed that I wouldn't split about the affair to your governor. I could have got my money directly by a hint to him." For he was proud, like your dearly beloved brother, and would have given ten times the money to hush up a good many things that I could have told him. Is that the truth, or not?"

Walter bowed his face on his trembling hands, and merely replied by a low moan. It was piteous to see how weak he was, how broken and abject. His jaunty, self-satisfied ease, the fresh brightness of his fair boyish face, were all gone.

"Well," pursued Alfred Trescott, for it was he, "I needn't recapitulate all that passed in Dublin. Those were good times for both of us; and if you did buy your experience at a tolerably expensive rate, why you had your fun for the money. And money was plenty enough with you then. Then came the smash at Hammerham, and——"

"Why, in the name of all the devils, do you torment me in this way?" broke in Walter, dashing down his clenched fist on the table. "What's the good of talking about all that? It's past and gone, and nothing that you or I, or any one else, can say will avail to alter it."

"Quite so," replied Alfred, coolly, at the same time dropping his handsome eyelashes over his eyes, with a half-suppressed smile. "All that cannot be altered, as you justly observed. But, though it cannot be altered, I don't choose that it shall be altogether forgotten, especially when you ask what you have to be grateful for. It's necessary to refresh your memory a little, do you see? When we met again in London, was it I who sought you out, or you who sought me? In addition to your other accomplishments, you had imbibed a taste for cards. Did I, or did I not, say to you that I thought card-playing an expensive amusement for a clerk at a hundred a year, or whatever your wages were?"

Walter rocked himself to and fro in his chair as though he were suffering bodily pain. He answered, without looking up, "I know very well what you said, and how you said it. You know that it was impossible for a fellow of any spirit to—to——"

"To refrain from doing what he liked? Ah! that has been the case with a good many fellows of spirit, I believe. However, I gave you good advice; and if you were too great a fool to follow it, I couldn't help that, you know."

"It was you who urged me to leave the rest of them, and go into lodgings by myself. That was the beginning of it all. If you had let me alone, I might have gone on steadily enough in time."

Tears of bitter humiliation and mortified pride were standing in the wretched boy's eyes as he spoke. Always weak and undisciplined in

temper, his health had been latterly so undermined by dissipation and ceaseless fretful repinings at his lot, that he had scarcely more self-control than a child. Alfred threw himself back in his chair with a short mocking laugh.

"Bah! I urged you! Are you a baby? I thought it was you who first said that you were tired of living under the rule of that precious brother of yours. It *was* a little too laughable. I wonder he didn't tie a string to your leg!"

"I have cut the string now, once and for ever," said Walter. "I shall never go back and face them all. After all Clem has said and done—oh, when I think of his face that Sunday night when I came home"—he hesitated, and Alfred coolly supplied the word—"drunk, eh?"

"When I saw him and my sister standing there in the passage, I felt as if I should have been glad to drop down dead rather than face them."

"Did he blackguard you?"

"No. He didn't say one word, but just stood aside to let me pass, and looked at me—oh, that look was the worst of all! I would sooner he had said *anything* than have looked at me like that."

"Ah, the old game. Trying to overawe you with his superior virtue. Humbug! But why the devil you ever stood his hectoring airs I can't understand."

"Clem has been good to me, too. But he—he expects too much of a fellow. If you ain't quite up to his mark, he always seems, somehow, to have such a contempt for you."

"Really!" sneered Alfred Trescott. "He must be a paragon himself, to be able to look down so magnificently on the rest of the world. You'd better go home, like a good boy, and beg pardon, and take your whipping pretty, and try to profit by such a moral example."

"Never!" said Walter again, with a sort of nervous tremor. "I *can't* do it. I know what Clement is. He wouldn't desert me, but he'd go to McCulloch and tell him that I must be withdrawn from the bank, and he'd talk in his stern way about not venturing to make other people responsible for my good conduct any more, and he'd make me go, cap in hand, to some d—d tradesman fellow or other to try for a situation. He told me, once, that if I could get no other honest work to do, I ought to take a broom in my hand and sweep a crossing."

"Affectionate brother!" said Alfred, scoffingly.

"Well, upon my soul, I believe he'd do it himself."

"But, not possessing any taste or talent for crossing-sweeping on the whole, you don't mean to return to the bosom of your family."

"I *can't* do it, I tell you. When I think of all the things that will have come out, now, in this day or two that I've been away, I feel that I *can't* face it. You don't know what it would be."

"My dear fellow, don't distress yourself to

apologise. I don't want you to go back. It's nothing to me. Only I'm rather curious to know what you do mean to do. Your prospects appear a little hazy."

"When I left home, I didn't intend to run away altogether. I only wanted to avoid Clem. Then, as I walked on, and began to think of it all, I resolved not to go to the bank. I knew Clem would seek for me there first thing. Then, gradually, by little and little, the idea came into my head that I would not go home any more. I wandered about all day until I was sick for want of food, and then I went into a chop-house, where——"

"Where you chanced to find me. You couldn't have lighted on anybody more sure to keep the secret of your whereabouts. I wouldn't tell your brother where to find you to save him from being burnt alive."

"Why?"

"Why? Because I believe he'd be glad to know."

"How you hate Clem!" exclaimed Walter, looking with something like fear at the handsome face before him.

"Humph! There's not much love lost between us. But what do you intend to do? You haven't yet unfolded your plans for the future. This is a charming place, no doubt, but you can't stay here for ever. And, even if you could, there would be something to pay, and as I can't go on lending you money, and as you appear to have none of your own——"

Walter had been drinking the vile brandy before him at intervals, and his mood had gradually changed from despondency to a feverish excitement. His face became flushed, and his speech thick.

"I shall go to Australia," he said, looking up defiantly. "To Australia. That's the country. I shan't always be the poor unlucky devil you see before you, Trescott. I shall make my way there, mark my words. I shall come back, some day, a rich man, and then see what Penny will say to me! Aha? In Australia I shall have a clear field. No one will know anything about me. I shall take another name. No black looks, no lectures, no—I shall be a man there!"

"But how are you to get there? What's the use of talking such infernal nonsense?" cried Alfred, irritably. He had been able to contemplate poor Walter's misery with great equanimity, but this sanguine mood exhausted his patience at once.

"I shall go in an emigrant ship," said Walter, looking at him with blinking eyes. "I've been hanging about the docks all day. I picked up a great deal of information. I've got my watch and chain—they cost fifty guineas—and one ring that I carry in my waistcoat-pocket. I shall sell them for—what they'll fetch. Plenty to take me to—Australia. You shall be paid, sir, the trifling loan——" His heavy head fell forward as he spoke. He recovered himself for a moment, nodded again, and then with an effort rolled off his chair, and

flinging himself on the wretched bed, appeared to fall instantly into a dead sleep.

Alfred stood looking at him for a moment. "Australia," he muttered, contemptuously. "Aye, you're cut out for an Australian life! poor, weak, childish creature! I know what it will be. You'll hang about here, shilly-shally, wasting hour after hour, and coming to no conclusion until every penny's gone of the money your watch brings, and then you'll have to crawl back and lick your brother's shoes in the dust. Damn it! If I had the money I would ship him off myself, if it was only that that sneaking arrogant cur shouldn't have the triumph of crowing over him and getting him back!" He closed the door quietly behind him, and went down-stairs. In the bar he stopped for a moment to say to a woman who sat there, "You won't allow the young gentleman upstairs to be disturbed, if you please. He is not quite well, and, if anybody should come to see him—it isn't likely—you had better—yes, I think you had better say he is not here."

CHAPTER VII. STORM.

THINGS were not going altogether well with Mr. Alfred Trescott. The prospect of his début seemed further off than ever, and he had almost quarrelled with his patroness, on the score of an offer she had made to pay for a year's study for him at one of the great foreign conservatories of music. This offer Alfred had indignantly rejected, and had irritated "my lady" into one of her brief fiery fits of anger. But this he had cunningly contrived not only to soothe, but to convert into increased sympathy with, and admiration for, his sensitive genius. It was the more easy to do this, in that Lady Popham had undergone a good deal of mortification before so far abandoning her expressed opinion that Alfred was already a finished artist, as to entertain the idea of sending him abroad for a further course of study. It was not, therefore, difficult to strengthen her in her original conviction that Alfred Trescott was a great violinist, that Lady Popham was a great connoisseur, and that the musical critics of London were great bunglers. Still, things were not going altogether well with Mr. Alfred Trescott. Since he had been in London, his secret conviction of his own incompleteness as an artist—almost deadened by the brilliancy of his Irish triumphs—had revived again; and great as he pretended his disappointment to be, and loudly as he continued to deplore the postponement of his appearance in the metropolis, it is certain that he would have felt very grave and anxious doubts as to the result, had the chance been offered him of an immediate trial. For—from various causes—he was now even less prepared for such a trial than he had been in Dublin. His hand was losing steadiness, his intonation was becoming occasionally uncertain, and, from the absolute cessation of any practice whatever, his passage playing was more unsatisfactory than ever. That his musical in-

stinct was too fine and sure to allow him to deceive himself on these points, made him neither more submissive to criticism, nor more tolerant of those who administered it. Then the future! Alfred was not much wont to look forward, but there were times when the question, what was to become of him? forced itself very disagreeably on his attention. Fortune did not seem inclined to favour him in his love either. Corda's visit to Desmond Lodge, which he had looked forward to as a means of gradually re-establishing the intimacy between Mabel and himself, had hitherto produced no such result as he had anticipated. The child had provokingly fallen sick after her visit to Mabel, and had been unable to go again. Then, too, Corda had latterly taken a strange habit of reticence in her talk with him. On the rare occasions when he had formerly condescended to converse with his sister, she had shown, by the eager, artless outpouring of her thoughts, how she prized the opportunity of affectionate confidence with him. Now, on the contrary, although more loving and tender in her manner than ever, Corda could not be tempted into speaking openly of Mabel. She would answer such questions as she could briefly, but would volunteer no word. Sometimes, if Alfred were in a gentle mood, she would twine her little slender fingers in his, and rest her head on his shoulder, and sit so, silent, for half an hour together. Once, after remaining thus for some time, she suddenly threw her arms round him, crying, "Oh! Alf, oh! Alf, be good, be good! I love you so, Alf, do be good!" and had fallen into almost hysterical weeping. This singular proceeding had been highly displeasing to her brother, who, to do him justice, was uneasy at the extreme weakness which the child showed, and which appeared to increase daily. Alfred had said some word to his father about having another doctor to see pussy-cat, and getting her wine and strengthening things; but Mr. Trescott, with the sort of infatuation not unprecedented in similar cases, had refused to acknowledge the least cause for alarm in Corda's state of health. Certainly she should have wine, and soup, and jelly, and whatever she fancied; but as to danger! pooh, it was absurd. The child had never looked better. She was growing fast, and was naturally thin in consequence, that was all.

Alfred Trescott walking away from the Surrey side of the river, where he had left Walter in the obscure tavern, towards the aristocratic though somewhat old-fashioned square in which Lady Popham's mansion was situated, had his little sister's image unaccountably in his mind. "By Jove," he said, mentally, "if pussy-cat doesn't get stronger soon, and if nothing turns up for me here, I would almost—almost—be tempted to accept the old woman's offer, and go abroad for a year with Corda. The governor could rub on all right with only himself to keep; and perhaps thorough change of air and scene and the delight of being with *me*—poor pussy-cat, how fond she is of *me*!—might set her up again. And if I were to work in earnest, who

knows? Away from all these people, and with no face that I know except that pretty, fair little one—it is a sweet little face—who knows?" It was in this unwonted gentleness of spirit, and with these unwontedly kind thoughts in his mind, that Alfred reached Lady Popham's door. He had so long been treated like a petted child of the house, privileged to be admitted at all hours, that it never occurred to him to inquire if Lady Popham were within, or to go through any of the formalities usual on making a call. The servant who had opened the door stopped him as he was walking across the hall. "I beg pardon, sir, but I'm not sure that my lady's at home."

"No matter; I will go into the little morning-room, and wait for her. There is some music there that I want."

"Very sorry, Mr. Trescott, but my lady isn't at all well, and can't see anybody."

"Not well? Is my lady unwell? However, I shall not disturb her; I will go into the morning-room and get what I want."

"Really, Mr. Trescott, I can't allow——"

Alfred turned and looked at the man. There was something unusual in his tone, and he had planted himself so as to bar the access to the morning-room. Alfred's face darkened.

"Do you know who I am?" he asked, with the haughty insolence of manner which characterised his intercourse with inferiors.

"Oh yes, Mr. Alfred Trescott," rejoined the servant doggedly, "I know who you are, perfectly. But my orders are not to allow you to pass, and I mean to carry out my orders."

Whilst Alfred was standing, literally speechless with astonishment, the man called to the butler, who was passing down the stairs, "Oh, Mr. Mitchell, ain't there a note for this gentleman?"

"Yes," said Mr. Mitchell, advancing with a letter in his hand; "yes, there is a note. My lady particularly desired that I should deliver it myself into Mr. Trescott's hand. You will please to observe, James, that I do deliver it into Mr. Trescott's hand. You had better show the gentleman out, if you please, James. If my lady hears voices in the hall, it will worry her, and my lady's hearing is very quick."

Still speechless, stunned, bewildered, Alfred allowed himself to be half elbowed, half led, out of the hall, without having uttered a syllable. The sharp closing of the door appeared to rouse him as though from a dream. The furious temper began to surge up like an angry sea, but utter astonishment still kept him outwardly calm. He looked at the closed door, and then at the letter in his hand. "Insolent hounds!" he ground out between his clenched teeth, "you shall pay for this." Then a thought darted into his mind, "Can she be *very* ill? dying? and are they already calculating on her death, and think it no longer worth while to be civil? Or Skidley and Miss O'Brien, are *they* trying to keep me out of her sight, for fear she should leave me anything in her will? At any rate,

she thinks of me, since she has written, and given orders that the note should be put into my own hand. Yes, yes, she is all right!" Though he said the words confidently, there must have been some secret misgiving in his mind that made him hold the letter tightly in his hand without opening it. He looked at the superscription. It was to "Mr. Alfred Trecott," written in Lady Popham's cramped characters, and even more trembling and illegible than usual. "The old woman must have been very shaky when she wrote that," muttered Alfred. "I wonder what it's all about! No matter! I'll read it quietly, and at my leisure."

Although it might have been supposed that he would be eager to learn the contents of Lady Popham's communication, he walked along the streets at a singularly dilatory pace, staring absently in at the shop windows, and even sometimes stopping outright. At last, by slow degrees, he reached the neighbourhood of his lodgings. Even then he did not bend his course homeward immediately, but turned down the blind alley in which the tavern was situated where he had left Walter Charlewood. The woman to whom he had spoken was no longer in the bar when he entered it, but in her place a very fat man, with a cowskin cap on his head, was leaning with both elbows on the counter, poring over a graphic account of the last prize-fight. The fat man looked up as Alfred entered.

"What can I do for *you*, sir?" he asked, in rather a surly tone. He had just reached the fourth round, and was becoming so deeply interested as to make any interruption unwelcome. Alfred nodded carelessly.

"I am going up-stairs," he said.

"Where to, sir?" demanded the fat man.

Alfred passed on without heeding the question, and was in the act of ascending the stairs, when the fat man called after him, huskily, "I say, there ain't nobody there! The young gent's gone."

"Gone! Where?"

"How the doose should *I* know?" retorted he of the cowskin cap, doubling down the newspaper, and commencing to trace the course of "Round the fifth" with an inexpressibly dirty thumb.

Alfred returned hurriedly to the bar, and faced him. "The gentleman's coming back, I suppose?" he said, rather in the tone of an assertion than a question.

The fat man dented the paper before him with his thumb-nail, so as to make a landmark by which to find his place again, in the—to him—difficult country of the printed columns, and with a heavy sigh of resignation looked up. "It was clear that he was not destined to enjoy uninterruptedly the delicious titbit prepared by the penny-a-liner's skilful fingers.

"Well, sir," he replied, tilting back the cowskin cap, and passing his hand over his forehead, "the gent may come back, or he may not. But if you was to ask me my opinion, I should say he wouldn't. Hows'ever, he didn't

say nothing to me, one way nor the other. His score's paid, and that's all I know."

"Oh, he paid his score, did he?"

"Well, no, *he* didn't, but t'other one did."

"T'other one; what are you talking about?"

"Why, his friend as fetched him away in a four-wheeler. There was two on 'em—a young light-haired party, an' a run-looking old chap with a dog."

Alfred uttered a great oath.

"What! didn't you know?" asked the fat man, with some semblance of curiosity on his stolid countenance. The only reply he received was a volley of curses, as Alfred turned and strode out of the place. The man's sensibilities were apparently not in the least ruffled by this very unexpected demonstration. He stared after the lithe retreating figure for a second or two with a ruminating expression of face, passed his hand once more over his forehead, replaced the cowskin cap in its original position, and, guided by the landmark, found his place, resumed his perusal of the great prize-fight, and was soon apparently as absorbed in its vividly written details as before.

Alfred's footsteps did not lag now, as he pursued his way homeward. He rushed along like a fleet keen wind. Corda, reclining in the sitting-room, on the little low chair she seldom quitted now, heard her brother knock violently at the street door, heard his rapid step mount the stairs and enter the room overhead, and then, after a pause of dead silence, heard him descend as rapidly, and approach the parlour door. In an instant he had entered, closed the door again behind him, and stood before her with a face so full of fury, so distorted and malignant, that the child uttered a little low cry of terror, and half rose in her chair. Alfred held Lady Popham's letter open in one hand, and was pointing to it with the other. For the space of half a minute—it seemed a long, long time to Corda—he stood panting and speechless, absolutely unable to articulate from rage. At last his voice came forth, broken and husky:

"You little devil! You little whining, canting, deceitful devil!"

Corda's pale lips moved, but no sound came from them.

"You treacherous, false-hearted, cursed little spy! Cringing and fawning with your infernal carying ways and false white face!"

The child was trembling violently from head to foot; she struggled breathlessly to speak, but her voice did not rise above a whisper.

"Alf! Alf!" that was all she said.

Her brother stood regarding her with eyes that seemed to blaze beneath his knitted brows, "Read that! Look there, that is *your* doing. Are you satisfied? Is your end gained? I am ruined. You have done your work thoroughly, and I hope your dear friends are content. Cunning, hypocritical, little devil!"

"Alf, if there is any mercy in your heart, listen to me for one moment. Let me speak, Alf! I beg and pray of you to let me speak!"

"Speak! you have spoken, and to some pur-

pose. Read that. Its contents will be no news to you, I dare say. But feast your eyes on your precious handiwork. Read it, I say!"

Corda mechanically took the letter from his hand, and cast her eyes on it. Once or twice she pressed her trembling hands together, as though to steady them. After two or three attempts, she dropped the letter in her lap, and sank back in her chair.

"I cannot read it," she murmured. "Indeed, indeed, Alf, I tried to read it, but I cannot. The letters swim before my eyes."

"Oh, you can't read, can't you? But you could write, it seems, and prowl, and spy, and betray your own brother. Hear what she says; it will please you."

He read rapidly: "'These disclosures have caused me the greatest pain, but there is no possibility of doubting their truth. I need not recapitulate the charges which Mr. Charlewood'—curse him!—'has brought against you, as your own conscience will, no doubt, accuse you more heavily than any words of mine can do.' You see you have been highly successful; there is a tribute to your talents! And again, here: 'I can only trust that you will wreak none of the anger which this letter is calculated to cause you, on the amiable child who has thus innocently been the means—'"

Alfred broke off in his reading to crush the letter in his hand, and to pour forth the most terrible imprecations. Corda shudderingly raised her clasped hands, and cried to him:

"Oh, Alf, you *must* not say such dreadful things! not for my sake, but for yours; it kills me to hear them. It kills me, Alf, it kills me!"

"Not for my sake, but for yours," he repeated, with a sneer that drew his lips back from his white glittering teeth. "Do you think you can humbug me still, you canting little hypocrite? For *my* sake? What did you ever do, or care, for my sake? It was a lie, all a lie, from beginning to end, your pretended fondness and affection! You never loved me!"

The child fell down before him, quivering like a wounded bird, and clasped his knees.

"Alf," she gasped, "Alf, if you knew, if I could tell you how it was, you—you—wouldn't say—such cruel, cruel things. I—it was by accident—I saw a letter—partly copied out—and then I knew by it that—that others had gone before,—and there was the address. And, Alf, I prayed—oh, I did pray so hard to do right. It was cruel to injure Mr. Charlewood, dear Alf."

At the name he made a rough, sudden movement to shake her off, but she clung to him still.

"Oh, it was not cruel to injure *me*, I suppose? Your own brother, your darling Alf? Lying little devil!"

"No, Alf,—only hear me, I humbly beg of

you,—I didn't think it would injure you. I—I tried to screen you, God knows I did. But I couldn't let that evil be done, dear, dear Alf, and be at peace. I—I—even hoped and prayed—that—that if I could set it right—and no—harm came of what you had done—it might be—easier for you to be forgiven—and to grow good, dear Alf,—and when you say—I—I never loved you, darling Alf, my own, own brother—it breaks my heart, it does—it does."

The tears came at last in such a passion of weeping, as shook her feeble frame with convulsive sobs. It might have moved him to compassion to see her clinging round him, kissing his hands, and covering them with her bright hair, all wet and stained with tears. But the demon temper within him made him blind and deaf to all save the promptings of his ungoverned fury.

"You have betrayed me, and ruined me, like a cold-hearted, ungrateful, treacherous little spy as you are," he cried, struggling to release himself from her clasp. "Only this very day, almost within this hour, I was planning to take you abroad with me, to make you well and happy, and to have you to live with me always. I little thought what a treacherous little viper,—let me go, I say; tears are easy enough to you, no doubt. Now, from this time forward, all is over between us; remember that. You have been clever enough to deceive me for a long time, but if you were a thousand times more clever, you could not make me believe in you again. You never loved me,—let me go,—I say again you never loved me; you're a canting, lying hypocrite, and I hate the sight of you!"

By a sudden exertion of his strength he unclasped her clinging hands, and, in his mad rage, thrust her from him with such violence that the blood gushed from her mouth as she fell heavily upon the floor at his feet.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "BELLA DONNA," "NEVER FORGOTTEN," &c.

CHAPTER III. HARCOURT DACRES.

ANY Dieppe exile could gather, from such a conversation as that recorded in the last chapter, a fair notion of Mr. Dacres's character. On the circuit he was "a real good fellow," and the object of many more such compliments. He had good talents; could make a rattling, dashing speech; in fact, was said to be an Irishman, though he always repelled "the charge." Mr. Dacres could have been in good practice on the circuit, had he chosen. He could laugh a case out of court; but he was often accused of sacrificing his client to his speech; and in a heavy case of an elopement, an injured husband seeking damages, could pour out the most pathetic declamation, "leaving not a dry eye in court," and deeply moved himself, with faltering voice, and tears in his own eyes, would make the most "beautiful" appeal in the world—all pathos and piety. At the bar dinner Dacres would be in great feather, telling capital stories, taking off the injured husband, his client of the day, compounding punch for the mess, and finally starting a little loo at a snug table in the corner, which went on till two or three in the morning. It must be said that Mr. Dacres was punctilious in arranging his gaming debts, and many a little "fiver," or "tenner," bound to my little Lulu at Dieppe" (shown to a few with a sort of pathetic paternal air) was handsomely diverted to the more pressing calls of honour. As for Dacres's "paper," it was always flying about; but he had that mysterious power, given only to men in these sort of difficulties, of somehow so dealing with charms—magician-like—as to keep himself "afloat." We, the more respectable and more scrupulous in payments, might strive in vain to get grace for fifty pounds.

He was absent a great deal from Dieppe, where the wife and child were kept, of course called away by business, running over there now and again when he could. Wise people often said to him he should get into parliament. "Why, a man that could make a speech like you, Dacres, ought to be solicitor-general at least." He could do other things

cleverly. He was connected with Mr. Black's well-known journal, and could rattle off slashing, vigorous articles on the word; that is, when the humour took him, or when Mr. Black could get hold of him. "That man would be worth his good twelve hundred a year, if he'd only stick to it." He could write an article for any review in truly brilliant style on the "cut of a horse"—and indeed, on all matters connected with the world in which that noble animal moves, was unimpeached. It was not surprising, therefore, that when nervous friends assured him solemnly—over punch—that "he ought to get into parliament—that it would be the making of him," he began at last to let the matter "come near him." A Scotch baronet, Trotter, who was going to travel in the East for two or three years, had met him at the cheerful board, and been "amused" by his humour. He was half inclined to let Dacres keep his seat warm for him; and being sounded on the matter, wrote at last to say that he would be glad to see Mr. Dacres at Trotterstown, N. B., for a few days, and talk the matter over.

This joyful news came when he was residing at Dieppe with his family, at a period of enforced domesticity, being very "low" indeed, not in spirits, but in other things. There were periods when he was obliged to be "dark," and when he complained pathetically he was not allowed to "breathe the air of his" (soi-disant) "native land." "After all, sir," he would say, huddling a few things into "the bag," "this is lonely work enough. I want kindly faces about the stove-side, the happy hearth, my boy. My poor girl withering in a foreign land, among the mounseers, and I enjoying myself like a beast!"

It was during one of these compulsory retirements, which had gone on longer than usual, and seemed to defy his usual skill for arrangement, that word came of what he called "the Trotter offer." A council was held. He had his darling Lulu on his knee. That young girl's eyes lightened and flashed; for she had a curious vigour of mind that often set Miss Pringle at her wits' end, and a born eloquence like that of her father.

"You must go, Harco," she said—she often spoke to him as a brother—"it is such a chance. Only think, to be in parliament, before the country, the nation! Why, you are lost as you

are. Mamma dear, if we strip ourselves of everything, we must send him off."

"Then I'm afraid the stripping won't go for much. But, in any case, d'ye take me for the selfish heartless father that would leave his wife and child without their little all, in *that* kind of a way? By the way," he added, suddenly, putting his child off his knee, "where's West? We must have his long head in, besides ours. Of course I mean long in the figurative way. Eh, wife, what could you sport, now, for the occasion—I mean in the way of wits?"

The wife was a gentle, rather stupid woman, with none of the Celtic perfervidum genius that was in father and daughter. She had been handsome; had been married for her beauty; was tall, worn, and, even now, elegant.

"What can I say, Harcourt?" she said, nervously. "I am the worst person in the world for advice."

He turned away impatiently. "She never took an allusion." He was pointing at something else. He had a certain delicacy, and would not say more.

"I'll go and put my head alongside of West's. We'll knock out something together for this grand occasion."

"Oh, papa," said Lulu, stopping. "No; you must not. You promised me before, that was never to happen again."

"Promise be hanged!" he said, angrily. "D'ye suppose I'm not to consult a friend?"

"Then if you do, Harco," said she, decidedly, "I'll go too. I'll forbid him to lend you money, I tell you before; he will do what I tell him, if it was to order him to go on his knees. You know he would."

"What the deuce will you have me do? Isn't that a specimen, now, of the way I'm treated in my family? Was there ever a poor hunted devil so checked? Ah, Miss Lu, ye should have been as delicate as all that, when Mother Pringle's last half came round!"

She gave a cry and started back. "Oh, you did that? Oh, how mean, how cruel, how unkind to expose me to that. Oh, mamma, mamma, I'm humiliated for ever and ever;" and she tossed her arms in the air, and walked to and fro very wildly.

"Gad now!" he exclaimed, "what's all this? You run off with things. I mean—I mean—that he gave that time I applied in that way; denied some of my own wants, which were pressing enough, to keep up the credit of my child. Of course it was in the way of a loan. Haven't I a regard for the credit and honour of the child that I—of my own child?"

This exceptional way of putting the loan transaction seemed purposely chosen; for his daughter, crying silently, merely sobbed out, "I shall never rest until that debt is discharged." Then she rose. "Go out, now, papa, and walk, or go to him and consult him. But not a word of that. Mamma and I will find out some more honourable way to help you."

In an effusion of fatherly affection he went towards her. He believed himself quite ge-

nuine. "I'm a poor, miserable creature," he said. "God help me! I have no purpose and no principle. I don't know how I'll end. I wish I was thrown out like a dog somewhere. I'm unworthy of you both, two such angels."

"Poor, poor Harko!" said Lucy, running towards him; there were actually genuine maudlin tears in his eyes. "Don't say that, or you'll make us wretched. Keep up; things will come right, and—and you'll be M.P. yet."

Four small hands had found their way to the velvet collar and blue cloth shoulders, and the wretched father, as he called himself, broke from these sympathising creatures and went out into the open air to smoothe his brow. He had to take a "little glass" at the corner restaurant fatally near their residence.

Mother and daughter went in to council. Indeed, Lulu was chairman and council herself. For she had "the longest and strongest head of us all," her father said. There was in the family property a diamond brooch, a wedding present which Mr. Daeres had actually paid for, and to which he had often circuitously alluded. Lulu had, however, determined it should be kept for a grand emergency. That seemed to be arrived now, and it should satisfy the Pringle obligation and the journey to Trotterstown. It was worth about one hundred guineas.

The father was sent away to play for the stake. He went rejoicing. Miss Lulu repaired to her friend Mr. West, and, shocked and grieved, insisted on restoring to him what he had advanced for her; which he, knowing resistance was useless, accepted gravely, but a little annoyed. "Where did all this flush of gold come from?"

Lulu drew herself up. "Are we quite paupers as well as exiles?—is that the insinuation, Mr. West?"

"Who has insinuated anything, sharp Miss Lulu? If I wished to find out, I have not forgotten my old craft."

"A detective, I suppose," she said, with trembling voice. "I don't doubt your gifts; but I know your motive in all this—a generous one. To lay me under odious obligation—me—to have me in your power."

"What would I gain by that? What is the precious profit in laying you under an obligation, Miss Lulu?"

"Never mind," said Lulu, pacing up and down excitedly. "And don't call me *that*."

"You mean something. I insist on knowing. You make a charge—unkind, unfair, ungenerous indeed—which has hurt me much."

She saw his wounded face, and a pang came into hers. In an instant she had seized his hand, and made as though she would kiss it.

He stopped her. "Don't!" he said. "I would sooner have a fair, kindly judgment of me in your heart than such a theatrical amende."

"I am a wretch," she rejoined, "a rash, foolish, wrong-hearted creature, full of hasty suspicion. Forgive me. Say so, or I can never bring myself to look at you, speak to you, or come into your presence again. Oh, say so!"

"Well, I do. There!" he said, sadly. "But it will always be this old story; and I shall be always the same fool."

She smiled brightly, and shook her finger at him. "Though I say these things, you know how I like you *here*," laying her hand on her heart.

He repeated, in the same sad tone, half smiling, "I suppose I shall be the same, always—the same to the end of the chapter."

"The same what?" said she, smiling. "But I know what you mean perfectly."

This was but a common pattern of what very often took place between the gentleman and his young lady. Her mamma deplored their "sparring," and privately remonstrated with her daughter about her warm temper.

"Oh, mamma!" she would reply, "it makes us like each other all the better." She unconsciously uttered a truth. It was all nature in her, not pettishness nor vixenishness. She spoke out her mind, and could no more help speaking than she could help her eyes flashing.

CHAPTER IV. BROTHER AND SISTER.

WHEN Mr. Daeres had embraced his lady with great affection, and hurried away to the Royal, trollying a merry stave, he left gloomy faces behind him. Their last little stake had been played, and failed.

"I had a presentiment it would turn out this way," said Mr. West. "However, it can't be helped; we must make the best of it."

"What is to become of us?" said Lucy, helplessly. "Though poor papa cannot help himself, don't let us make a fuss to him about it."

"I have no patience with him," said Mr. West, slowly; "and I own I am sadly disappointed. Of course I have no right to say anything *here*, or to say so much." And he looked at Lucy; but she seemed determined to treat it lightly; perhaps she was rejoiced to see her father back.

"And why couldn't he stay? The first moment he arrived to go off with a gentleman he picks up on a steamer!"

"But, Gilbert," said his sister, impatiently, "what on earth has it to do with you?"

Miss Lucy was a little abstracted, and did not hear this speech.

"That gentleman with him!" she said, raising her eyes thoughtfully; "what a handsome man he was!"

"I knew you were coming to that," said Mr. West, sarcastically. "The notion has been dancing before your brain ever since, and now it comes out. I saw it all the time."

"One of the handsomest men I ever saw," she went on, with enthusiasm; "like an Italian tenor."

Mr. West laughed in the same bitter way, and said:

"You saw the Italian—Farini—that came down from Paris to give a concert—a fellow with chalky cheeks—well, *he* was an Italian tenor!"

She turned to him with colour mounting in her cheeks:

"You are out of humour to-night; what is the matter? Pray, why should I not remark a handsome face without being brought to account for it? Why do you lecture me, Mr. West, about tenors? You will not find me inclined to sacrifice my independence, or be obsequious to you, as some of the others are, on any terms. I give you fair warning, Mr. West."

"Oh, Lulu!" said her quiet mamma, quite shocked at this burst.

"I don't care, mamma," said the young girl, walking to and fro excitedly. "I am not going to submit to any influence or lecturing. I may be a poor weak girl, and his a strong powerful mind, and all that"—here she curtsied ironically—"but I give him fair notice I shall keep my freedom."

He turned away impatiently to the window. This was another "sparring" match, common enough between them.

Miss West said to her, bitterly:

"How sharp Miss Lucy Daeres is! Not so poor or so weak, after all, I suspect."

Before Lucy could answer, Mr. Daeres had entered the room, but quite changed—older, because "put out."

"There's a polite Englishman for you! We're nothing but bores, after all, I believe. He comes down to me at the Royal with a story—headache and feverish throbbing—exhausted—must go to bed. I don't believe a word of it. Then he says, 'Of course you'll dine here?' just the same, confound him, as though I were a servant! I wonder he didn't add, 'They'll take care of you in the servants' hall!'"

"Poor papa!" said she, going up to pat his head. "He was sick, recollect."

"Oh, be off, now! I'm tired, too, after my journey. When's your dinner to be ready? I suppose I must wait hours, and then get a bit of tough leather! Travelling hard and fast, and a bit of last night, and then, looking forward to a snug comfortable evening, to be served in that way!"

Who would think this to be the "delightful gay creature," all affection, and good humour, and heart! Mr. West was looking at him with unconcealed contempt and dislike.

"We must go now," he said. "Come, Margaret. It is unfortunate you should have come back to us with such a disappointment; but——"

"What d'ye mean by that, Mr. West?" said the other, with a lowering brow. "It's my own affair, wholly and solely; no man else's money was embarked in it; and I can set off after fifty Trotters, fifty times, if I like. Do ye know, West, I think at times you're devilish free, and——"

"Hush!" said that gentleman, quietly. "This, of course, is Dieppe, where we have all a pleasant license in language allowed us. I was speaking of the dinner disappointment; but it's no matter."

"No more it is, my holy St. Frances de Sales—my good man suffering. Ha! ha! All I say is, let every man let me alone, and I'll let him

alone. I'm a little too old a boy to be lectured or brought to book by any of the professors."

Mr. West made no reply, but, with his sister, took his leave. There was a scornful half-defiant look in Miss Lulu's eyes as she gave him her hand. Brother and sister went away home, leaving the family to their tough bit of "leather;" "the best company in the world" being now about to vent his ill humour and troubles on his wife and daughter. These "delightful" creatures require the lamps lit, and the scenery, and full boxes and pit, to inspire them even with ordinary good humour.

Mr. Gilbert West and his sister walked silently home to their rooms in the Place. When they had sat down, and found the lamps lighted, the sister spoke:

"I hope to-night has at last begun to open your eyes. You, with your penetration, are beginning to see what that girl is."

He did not answer, but lay back in his chair, his fingers together, his eyes on the ceiling.

"She gave you as good a hint to-night as you, with all your cleverness, would give. There was no misunderstanding it. 'I must have my liberty. I will not be lectured,' I declare," added Miss Margaret West, warming up, "I felt my blood boil as she spoke. Such a rude, ill-regulated, ill brought-up creature! She has no respect for you."

"She never meant *that*, at least, Margaret. You are mistaken there."

"I tell you what she meant, though. She meant to tell you she was tired of your following her, and paying and giving her good advice. Have you no comprehension? She said it as plain as English words could put it. But is it any use talking to you? You, a man of your years, forty-two—double that school-girl's age. No wonder she laughs at you."

"It's a folly, an infatuation," he said, in a low voice. "I admit it. Call it anything you like."

"And then," went on the sister, in a soft voice, "the air and manner of that man. He has no respect for you. I wonder you allow him to treat you in that way."

"Could you not see, Margaret, he had been taking his cherry brandy?"

"Oh yes," went on the sister; "but it is time the whole folly should stop. I feel ashamed people here should be talking of your infatuation. They laugh at your excuse about me. Now I am well, have been well this year, and I am sick of the place, dying to get home."

"It will come back again," he said. "You know it will."

"Folly! A man turning grey, of ripe age, that ought to be minding his law-books instead of running after school-girls. Gilbert, I had always a high opinion of your sense and wisdom; but latterly really you are getting childish."

"You are right, Margaret," said he, in a low voice. "I begin to think you may be right."

"Oh, she is wise enough in her kind. She knows well what she is about. And that about the English officer. She saw that it annoyed

you, and she went on. I could have set her down if I could have trusted my temper."

These were hard sayings and cruel home-thrusts, and West felt every one of them. She saw his wounded look, and then went over to him.

"I only say this for your good, dear Gilbert, and I know well your affection for me, and what brought you here, and what keeps you here in this dreadful place. You think it is for my health, though indeed I am quite well now. But still I know that this—this liking of yours will grow into an infatuation, and mar all your life. She is only a child, and will treat you like a child. You will one day, when it is too late, deplore this miserable liking."

He looked up, and took her hand. "Margaret, I begin to be a little ashamed. You always say what is sensible. You are quite right. I do begin to see it is folly. But it is very hard. The worst is, she is no child; there you are wrong. Still I *do* begin to see the folly of it all. I have been a fool; but," he added, with a rueful smile, "not a very great one, so far."

"Indeed no," she said, kindly. "And the next best thing would be to let us get away from this terrible place. I am well now; I am, indeed. I shall have no relapse. The sights and doings of the set here make me miserable. Let us try some other place, and if it does not suit I will promise you to come back here."

"Yes," he said, eagerly, "it is a loathsome spot. Why should we be bound to it, if, as you say, you are quite well? I am as sick of it as you, and you know, though I have my weakness, why it is I have stayed here so long. Indeed, there was but that one reason."

"This is Thursday," she said, her cold face lighting up. "It is years since we were in Paris. Why not say Monday?"

"With all my heart," he said.

"Good, kind brother," she said, and went away with a light heart.

CHAPTER V. "COZ CONSTANCE."

HE remained walking up and down. In a few minutes he said, suddenly, "Yes, we must do it; it is the best course!"

The maid entered and put a note into his hand. He started as he saw the writing, and went hastily to the lamp to read it. It ran:

"Dearest Mr. West. I have been miserable since you left, about the way I spoke to you to-night—the light, cruel, and unkind way—and papa too. But he has returned disappointed, and you know it was not he that was speaking, it was the fatal cherry B. But, for myself, I could cry with repentance and grief. The truth is—shall I tell you? When you are by, I feel an influence that I know may be too strong for me one day, and, perhaps, I think that this sort of manner may be my best defence. For oh! you are so clever and wise, and I cannot bear to think of my own wretched inferiority when you are by. Now, I tell you this, though against myself; and if I give way again, you have leave

to quote my own confession against me, and so keep me in order.

"If you do not write me back a line, at once, to say you have forgiven me, I shall lie awake and be miserable all to-night, which I am sure you would not wish—though you may like to punish me a little.

"Yours ever sincerely—and repentantly—
"LUCY DACRES."

We should have seen the change in Mr. Gilbert West's face as he read; he almost smiled—such a happy look!

"I am not to be deceived," he said. Neither was he, though he knew that "lying awake all night" was one of those eager exaggerations which was characteristic of Lucy. She would have dropped asleep after, say, "an hour's misery." Enters now his sister, with a light step.

"I have been speaking to them below," she said. "It came on them with a great shock, but they say they will let us off with a month's rent."

"My dear Margaret," he said, eagerly, "we have changed all that, as these French would say. This has come in since. Will you trust my better judgment? *Now* will you call it folly?"

She looked at the writing, and threw it on the table impatiently. "Indeed, I *do* call it the worst of folly—madness and infatuation. Do you mean to tell me—you—Gilbert, a sensible man of middle age, that you have been changed by a screed of nonsense like this?"

He was in good humour, and could be superior to her now. "Well, since you ask me, Margaret, I *am* a little changed; at least, we shall not leave this on Monday. There is no *violent* hurry. The good people here would give out all sorts of things—come in for a fortune, or going home to avoid being arrested."

"I see it is no use arguing with you now," said she, angrily. "But remember, I tell you this will all end badly; and you will be sorry, one day, you did not listen to my advice. And when you are in your next fit of "lows" and depression—when things have turned with you again, and you see it is all folly and infatuation, don't expect any sympathy from me."

"Indeed I will, dear Margaret," he said, smiling; "and I know I shall get it, too."

She turned impatiently and left the room. Mr. West was a wise man, and "a deuced long-headed fellow;" could see through an oak panel. But once in a Mahomet's paradise, all men are pretty much on a level.

The truth was, he had led a very dismal prison sort of life, his mind promenading in flagged whitewashed corridors and yards. Within the last few months he had come upon the open commons, the green lawns, and found the air sweet and fragrant.

At that moment a light step made him look up, and the third member of this household entered—a pretty reflective face, with black hair, with eyes that she fixed on those she loved with the innocent watchfulness of a dog's, but small in height, and slightly made. This

was Constance Hardy, a clergyman's daughter and third cousin. She had six sisters, and was, of course, intending to be a governess one day. The only drawback to this step was that *he* did not approve of it—it was the poorest and most miserable profession in the world; and what Gilbert West said was, for her, inspired wisdom.

He, however, had comforted her by saying that if any one was likely to succeed at such a profession *she* was, and insisted she should come over and stop with them at least a year, and learn French at the convent close by. The year was nearly run out—the most delightful year of her whole life. The intelligent reader will guess the reason;—at home, in the baby-house of a parsonage, the six sisters had married her again and again to splendid Cousin Gilbert, and had settled to come and stay with her whenever he should open old Westtown. This sort of compliment she had accepted with great pleasure, but sighed over it in private; for the happiness was Utopian, and about as far off as a coronet. Gilbert West was to her worshipping eyes as full of perfection as any angel. She knew, too, of that early trouble, now so long, long ago, which had coloured all Cousin Gilbert's life, and she felt every pang that he had felt. Therefore, when she had flown over with delight to Dieppe, she felt a pleasure that he had begun to take interest in the world again; for she had learned to think him a sort of ascetic, who was never to smile again. But, before a few hours had gone by, she found out the reason of this recovery. It gave her a pang; but as he was her chief thought, her first idea, she soon found a satisfaction in the idea that he was wakening up to life and happiness, and, after a little struggle, reconciled herself to welcoming and forwarding what was fatal to any little dreams she may have entertained herself. It was no wonder that Gilbert himself became to have an affection for her. He knew thoroughly her devotion and interest in him; admired her cleverness; but had not the faintest idea that her regard for him went beyond mere respect, gratitude, and intellectual admiration.

Margaret West, stiff, cold, unsympathising, save in one object and one direction, could look gently on Constance's affection, which she was shrewd enough to discover from the first. Indeed, it soon came to be her heartiest prayer that he could transfer all that interest to the gentle, trustful creature who so loved him. She had no jealousy, and tried to be as soft as she could to her. She even, in an awkward fashion, strove to make opportunities, and, exercising a kindly self-denial, let Constance perform the household offices—breakfast, tea-making, and the like—which were hers properly. Mr. West lived in his own day-dream, which hung as a cloud before his eyes, though he could not be unconscious of his cousin's ceaseless and gentle devotion, and often said to her suddenly, on discovering some fresh instance:

"You, poor good Coz Constance! Why do you think of such things, and take all this

trouble for me? I don't deserve it, and am only a selfish fellow, like the rest of us."

On this day she, too, saw the brightness and happiness in his face, and her old instinct told her the reason. That is but a poor selfish sort of love, as *she* knew, that can only love when we ourselves have a share in the transaction. She was content—or perhaps had trained herself to be content—at looking on at the little play from round the edge of the scenes—helping, contriving, prompting, but taking no direct part. A kind of sublime, unnatural virtue, it will be said, quite unknown to this earth, and wholly fanciful. She came in just as Miss West had gone out.

"Margaret has been scolding me, coz," he said. "She says I am turning a sort of middle-aged fool. You and she will put your heads together presently and agree in that."

"No, indeed," she said, earnestly; "you have always behaved wisely and well, and have such great sense."

"Well," he went on, in a sort of dreamy satisfaction, "I think I do know something about character; at least, when I was at the bar my 'brethren' used to tell me so. I feel an interest in that little girl, she is so fresh and natural; but Margaret has been conjuring up a terrible picture of coming horrors, madness, misery, and what not. Now sit down there, Coz Constance, for I know you have an interest in my foolish self, and tell me what you think."

"I think," said she, with an enforced earnestness which gave her a little pain, but only for a moment, "that whatever makes you happy, and changes the tone and colour of your life, is the best, and for the best, and should be done."

"Well, but about her? Is she this sort of witch, this dangerous mermaid, that will by-and-by drag us all on to rocks? Now, you know her. Tell me, do you like her? Just read that letter, which has had the effect of sending away poor Margaret in great excitement. Would you say that was acting——"

This was another trial, but she bore it bravely.

"Indeed it is genuine," she said, with the same eagerness. "And I think she is a charming, natural character, that would make any one happy."

"So I say. I am sure you are right."

"The only thing is," she went on, hesitatingly, "she is so young and inexperienced, and so new to the world, that—you won't think me absurd giving you advice, Cousin Gilbert?"

"Dear no," he said, warmly. "Well?"

"That young girls who have seen nothing are naturally changeable, and the fact of their feeling themselves at all bound would almost make them think it a restraint. So——"

"So! now what on earth are you coming to, wise woman?" he said, in great amazement. "What Rosicrucian refinement are you going to start on me?"

"I mean," she said, "that I would not think of any promise, or any engagement, or anything of that kind. I would even not seem too

anxious to *her*. Because she has seen so few, and if any one else——"

"That was handsome and fine-looking, I see," he said, smiling. "But you are quite right; and though the advice is wonderfully Machiavellian to come from my simple, innocent Coz Constance, still I think it most sensible and judicious, and I will follow it."

"It is for your sake," she said, earnestly. "For Margaret may be right; and we are both interested in you, and if you play *everything* on a single chance like this——"

He looked grave. "A thousand thanks!"

A HOLIDAY ON HORSEBACK.

WHEN, two hundred years ago, Mr. Samuel Pepys desired to go from London to Huntingdon, the first necessity of his case was to purchase a pair of jack-boots at St. Martin's-le-Grand: a quarter of the town famous for those articles of riding gear; and his next care was to hire a post-horse. He was not an equestrian either by nature or habit. When mounted, he was apt to grow frightened, and to wish himself well out of any crowd or difficulty. Moreover, the horses used in those days were mostly stallions, always ready on every opportunity to fight with each other, to kick, and to bite, and to rear, and otherwise to deport themselves uncomfortably. It was, no doubt, therefore, with some trepidation and uneasiness that the good naval secretary prepared himself for the saddle; but there was no help for it, unless he bought a coach especially for the journey, in which case it would have taken about four days in fine weather to accomplish the sixty-odd miles, and have cost twenty pounds beyond the price of the coach. To go even to St. Martin's-le-Grand from the court or official quarter of the town was an enterprise of some difficulty, and of some peril. If the passenger went on foot, he was liable to be hustled by bullies, to be beaten or to have his nose slit by the servants of any nobleman who took offence at his demeanour. If too peaceable to allow a quarrel to be fixed upon him, he might easily tumble down an open cellar; if he had an unscrupulous enemy or a pretty wife, he might be suddenly arrested as a Catholic. If a rich man, he was likely to be kidnapped for ransom; or till he gave his consent to his daughter's marriage with a sharper. If he took a hackney-coach, the driver probably drove him to his own lodgings, a fearful nest of fever, depravity, and bad smells, where he was made to wait for some hours while the jarvey changed horses; and he was lucky indeed if he got clear out of the transaction without being robbed. The hackney-coach, too, made of rotten wood and mouldy leather, lined with musty straw, and held together by a single bolt, frequently broke down upon the road, or the bottom came out, and left a passenger suddenly seated in the quagmire of an undrained street. Mr. Pepys, however, escaped all these mishaps, and, when fairly

equipped, took the road, and, changing his horse at the usual stages, arrived at his destination in about twelve hours. Pistols and a sword formed a necessary part of his travelling dress, as they did of that of every prudent man.

In these times the prudent man takes, instead, an omnibus, a cab, or an underground railway, to King's-cross. There he finds a small town erected especially for his accommodation—a town ruled by a government of which Mr. Pepys never dreamed; a government whose officers are and must be active men, and not dummies, the effect of whose good or bad rule being immediately visible and felt by the townspeople, or shareholders, they seldom neglect their duties; a government in which a shrewd person is justly valued, and not sat upon by a titled oaf. In this model city a modern traveller may provide himself with anything, from a sandwich to a biographical dictionary, and stepping into a comfortable carriage, be pleasantly whirled, without fatigue, to Huntingdon in precisely one hour and fifteen minutes, and at a cost of eight shillings and ninepence sterling.

I have been led into these reflections because it is to Pepys's house we are now going on a pleasant mission concerning horses and horse-taming. In the same carriage are seated a farmer, a clergyman, a tailor, a horse-dealer. Let us lazily, lazily, lazily hear what they have to say. It may do us good. The farmer is a sound agricultural chemist. He knows all about artificial manures. He is far from being bigoted or obstinate. He says that the present prices of wheat continue to pay the British farmer, but he knows that future prices will not do so, and that every acre of British land will soon return to its natural and most profitable state of pasture. Even now the best part of farming seems to be weaning calves; nearly thirty per cent to be realised on it, barring mishaps. He says landlords do not like small tenants. They like to put their ground into farms of at least a thousand acres. He knows that farming, to succeed well, ought to be conducted, like all other business, on a large scale, and with a large capital; and that generally there is not enough capital applied to farming. He is a keen-eyed, neatly dressed man. He has no peculiarity, except a slight tendency to use long "public" words; and when mentioning his landlord, he speaks of him as A. B. Fatlands, Esq., and not merely as Mr. Fatlands. Otherwise, he might be a medical man, or a lawyer, or a city tradesman. The clergyman also is very different from the parson of the old school who married the waiting-maid, and left his patron's table as soon as pudding was served. The refinement of this ecclesiastic is rather oppressive until he warms; but then he tells a goodish story of a friend of his who was plucked at Cambridge, because he would go fishing on an examination day. The tailor keeps hunters and makes thousands and tens of thousands yearly. He is going to sport over the lands of a railway speculator ten times richer than himself. What knew Mr.

Pepys of sporting tailors and railway Plutos? And the horse-dealer, and the nobleman? The first is a quiet, keen-looking gentleman, remarkably clean and sedate in his appearance. His business extends all over the world. He is an experienced traveller, and an accomplished linguist, who buys horses in thousands to mount the cavalry of armies, and to whom peace or war is a far more vital question than to most professional diplomatists. Lastly, the peer derives the best part of his income from his share in a commercial firm. Mighty changes these since the time of Mr. Pepys!

Although nearly all comfortable Englishmen now live in the country, and London is fast becoming little more than a gigantic workshop for all trades and professions, few parts of the kingdom are so little known as Huntingdonshire. It seems to lie out of the way of snug tradesmen and brisk lawyers; and land is still to be got for sixty pounds an acre. Huntingdon is still, not indeed the Huntingdon of Cromwell, but—not to put too fine a point upon it—let us say the Huntingdon of George the Third.

First in the objects of interest near it is Hinchinbroke, the home of the old cavalier family of Cromwell. It was here that the chief of that loyal house, Sir Henry, called "the Golden Knight," gave to Queen Elizabeth a very gorgeous festivity, and his son, Sir Oliver, treated dour King Jamie to the best dinner he ever had in his life, when his majesty was coming up to London to take possession of the English crown. It is said to have been the most magnificent entertainment ever presented by a British subject to his sovereign. The result of that great dinner may be, perhaps, still traced in our history, for by this and similar profusion the splendid gentleman so ruined himself that his estate passed into the hands of his lawyer, Sir Sydney Montague, ancestor of the Earls of Sandwich. If Oliver Cromwell, the nephew and godson, had not lost all hope of inheriting so fair a domain, he might never have become a malcontent and a rebel, and a founder of British liberty.

The moderate sized family house of Hinchinbroke, though partly burnt down, has been so rebuilt in accordance with what was probably its first plan, that it is one of the quaintest of old English residences. It is full of peaked windows which exclude the light, and of passages leading nowhere, and low-browed vainscoted rooms, looking out on gardens which shut away small portions of air and light from the use of the family; gardens defended from wind by ivy-covered walls, marvellously trim and pretty, but with no fair view, no noble prospect of hill and valley. Our ancestors had a strange passion for darkness. They loved to sit and sing and drink in it for hours. When angry, they shut themselves up in the dark, and scolded through the door. Here is a very fine portrait of Charles the Second, probably an original, given by the king to the first earl. It represents him as handsomer than any of the other portraits—a

slim, dark, melancholy man, thoughtful and rather tired. Here, too, is a portrait of the bluff sailor earl himself, who brought Charles to England, and founded the fortunes of his own family and that of Mr. Pepys—a kind, handsome, jovial face; everybody's friend, everybody's lover; but with such a scorn of your mere citizen, that he could say he would "rather see his daughter with a pedlar's pack upon her back than married to one of them." A noble cavalier, proud, brave, ignorant, high-hearted. The portrait of Cromwell is a poor one. There is a handsome likeness of the present earl, given him by a grateful tenantry; a deserved tribute to a good man.

Once out of the boxed-up little gardens, and beyond the skittle-ground, the outside park is so lovely, that it seemed strange that its possessor should have ever cared for the vulgar strife of petty politics and court intrigues. The landscape and grounds are still the same as those which Cromwell looked upon. They are studded with majestic oaks and spreading yew-trees, and fair with lovely uplands, where the crows browse upon grass crisp and fresh.

And now away again past the portress's lodge. Her pleasant curtsy and good-bye rousing an astonished echo amidst the stillness of the tranquil day, as we leave the place all bathed and sleeping in sunshine and repose, with its old historic memories like a halo round it. The caw of the rook and the coo of the wild dove are heard among the trees and fields. Our footsteps grate strangely upon the gravel of the road; every footfall very loud. The gnat and the mote are abroad in the sunbeam, and the prosperous bee wings his flight towards the gardens. Birds sing delightfully on every hedge-row. Child-voices come, and go, and prattle, as the children stop to gather berries, and romp on again. Pheasants call from their cover; a distant mill clatters busily; the still bubble of fish oozes to the surface of the placid water, unruffled by a breeze. So along amidst these sweet country sights and sounds, with echoing footsteps, a solitary market-cart approaching in the distance—all steeped in sunshine—blessed healthful English sunshine, which lights, and warms, and gladdens, and which does not blast and scorch! Could the old fable, that the children of the earth gained strength whenever they returned to her, be really meant for application to Londoners out for a holiday? I would give something to lie down for an hour in these fields; I am sure I should be the better for it. In Russia it is found a sovereign cure for rheumatism to bathe the patient in warm earth on which the sun shines.

But here we are at the house of the late S. Pepys, Esq., at Brampton. It is but a mile from Hinchinbroke. This old manor-house of Brampton really was Pepys's house, and not the farm-house at the entrance of Brampton village, as is sometimes supposed. Here is the close garden where the guineas were buried when the Dutch came up the Thames, and all which the prince of gossips never could find

again when he tried to dig them up—as quaintly chronicled in his diary.

As if in strange banter with its old association, and with Pepys's hatred of horsemanship, Pepys's house has now become the home of a horse-tamer, well known by all the country round. We are kindly welcomed by a jovial, sensible-looking man, of the true Cromwell or Huntingdonshire build. Strong, rather thick-set, of plain speech and manners, he might well have been a country mayor or town councilman of old-fashioned ways but for his dress, which is professional, and shows that he is indeed the horse-tamer himself, a successful disciple of Mr. Rarey. But says he, confidentially, at an early stage of our acquaintance, "Rarey's cream was all skim-milk before I took to it, so there are no five thousand guineas for me." However, he still seems to do very well, and he told us readily and good naturedly how he did it.

"It is, you know, sir," said he, "quieting of them by kindness" (the great politeness of his discourse gave an infinite zest to it); "and if you will only oblige me by coming along in here, you shall see for yourself."

So we entered a dim little shed, where a bright glimpse of garden came in through a circular hole in the wall, and our entertainer took a strong, raw-boned, thorough-bred colt by "Richmond," and threw it down on the soft ground, after the manner of Rarey. The horse made several desperate efforts to get up; but, after fighting furiously, soon lay quite quiet and subdued, with eyes looking humbly up for some sign of encouragement and kindness. Sitting gently down upon the prostrate colt, and stroking its nose and ears softly, the trainer continued his agreeable teaching by beating a kettle-drum at its ears, opening and shutting an umbrella violently before its eyes, and dancing on its ribs.

"Horses," he observed philosophically, "take a liking to a man who manages of them properly—for their good and our own. Now, my system subdues them, as you see, and *don't take too much out of their legs*. You have no call to pull at a horse to make him back."

The colt was now erect. A lamb in behaviour, and was being taught to back.

"If you pull at him, he's stronger than you are, and he gets the pull against you. When I want to make a horse back, I stand before him, and tap him smartly in front. He soon gets away from the whip; and then, if you pull the rein gently, he will learn what you want. When a horse once knows what you want, I say that man does no wrong to punish him if he don't obey, with whip and with spur, one or both; only do not go for to punish him when he don't know what he has done wrong, or hasn't done right."

A child steals in to us, a round-headed, golden-haired, rosy-cheeked boy, sturdy and shy, but not indisposed to entertain friendly proposals, having reference to "suckers," as they call lollipops down here. He nestles up to his

father. "He's a spoiled child, sir." They stroke and pat the colt together. I think, as I look at them, that if ever I buy a few thorough-breds, I could trust them very safely in such kind and skilled hands.

The new method of horse-taming, so easy and expeditious, is a great improvement on the brutal old system of lunging, whipping, and spurring a horse into obedience. "But, sir," said the operator, "no gentleman should try this game himself." And, indeed, it was so amusing and pleasant, that it seemed more like a "game" than a business. The Expert went on to explain: Unless in hands perfectly cool and experienced, nervous or ill-tempered horses would be rendered by it permanently cowardly and vicious, so that there would be no future possibility of handling them at all with security. Or, while staggering about, in a confined space, on their hind legs, would be nearly certain to injure their hocks, and to throw out curbs. Also, an unskilful operator would be almost sure to come to signal grief himself. An incautious shoulder might be very easily dislocated by a determined plunger, or half the bones of a rash adventurer's chest driven in; and a rough colt's head brought suddenly in contact with an enthusiast's teeth, might give him much painful leisure for tardy reflection while under the hands of the dentist. It is prudent, therefore, thoroughly to master Mr. Rarey's art before attempting to try issues with so wilful an opponent as a cross-grained colt. But this is to say no more than that horse-taming is like every other business by which men earn a livelihood. It requires a long and painstaking apprenticeship before it can be turned to any good account.

Presently a gentleman farmer comes in with a colt to break. He, too, knows that the price of wheat must soon fall far beneath all English competition. He is anxious to turn his attention in time to horse-breeding. Nothing can promise better if he breeds fairly. He will have only to give confidence to the London dealers, and to prove to them that sire and dam of every colt is of pure blood and sound constitution, to select fashionable stock with sound judgment and to feed liberally, to command his own prices. London horse-dealers have always more commissions on their hands, for blood cobs and thorough-bred hackneys, than they are able to execute, at any price. First-class horses will fetch seven hundred pounds each, and can be bred for one hundred and fifty. Cattle-farming and horse-breeding are the only true safe investments for British farmers, and those who cannot manage to make it answer will have to give up that trade, and find another—perhaps a worse one. It must not be forgotten that, as horses may now be broken without any injury whatever to their legs, they may be sent into the market at three years old, instead of four years: a very important consideration to the breeder. A three-year-old, if carefully trained and taught, will do very well for light work, and cannot be

put at it too soon. He will make a far better horse for a timid girl than a five-year old, and may be then educated to do nearly anything but talk. He could not, however, have been broken even, without permanent injury, under the old system. It is always better, and, in the long run, cheaper (we still borrow substantially from our intelligent farmer) to breed first-class horses; for it costs as much to rear a fiddle-headed, cat-hamned, clumsy brute as it does to bring up a beauty as fine as paint. Even a half-bred horse resembles an article with the royal arms on base metal. To get pure-bred horses it is always necessary to go to the best blood, and there are in England about three hundred blood stallions whose services are to be got at prices varying from five guineas to fifty. Perhaps twenty guineas would be a handsome average in the hands of a good judge of figure. The brood mares to be bought at moderate prices are very numerous. But it is right to say that a great many thorough-bred horses die before coming to maturity.

To struggle out of the pupil state to which I was reduced by all this useful knowledge poured out upon me, I here threw in a little information of my own about prices. Hacks of high character, in the right hands, sell readily at figures varying from one hundred and fifty to seven hundred pounds; seldom below, still more seldom above those sums. Park phaeton horses, well matched, and stepping well together, produce from three hundred to eight hundred pounds the pair; single-harness horses of real quality range from two hundred to seven hundred pounds each. Hunters may be sold at fancy prices, from fifty pounds to a thousand; but nothing of much account, with character, under three or four hundred, except for light weights, or cattle with an "if and an" about them. A pair of very large blood carriage-horses were recently sold for two thousand guineas. It is useless to quote the price of race-horses, which is regulated by their engagements, and is as much a speculative affair as was the price of tulip-roots formerly in Holland. A "screw," not worth five pounds off the turf, may be cheap at five thousand upon it.

Such exceptional sums paid for horses of the very highest class figure and fashion must not, of course, be taken as the average price of ordinary horses. That, strange to say, has varied little, if at all, since the time of Solomon. Two hundred years ago in England, common country nags were worth from ten to fifteen pounds, and that is still about their present price at fairs and markets. Sir G. Carteret (temp. Charles the Second) gave forty pounds for a good hackney; a useful horse enough may be now bought for the same sum. Pepys gave fifty pounds for a pair of black carriage-horses; and doubtless a pair quite as good as the awkward draught cattle of that day would not cost more in ours.

Even our highest prices are by no means re-

markable for their novelty. Very rare and beautiful horses were always sold for immense prices by those who knew how to sell them. Alexander gave four Roman talents, probably about eight hundred pounds sterling (then an enormous sum), for Bucephalus; and even our own dounce King Jamie, no very dashing cavalier, gave five hundred pounds for a small stallion, an amount perhaps now at least equal to five thousand. In Canada, horses are sometimes sold by weight, and a two-year-old, bred by Mr. Charles Philips, of Cracop, in Cumberland, fetched four shillings and eightpence a pound.

Our equestrian conversation concluded with several useful hints from our host: The best test of really good breaking is, that a horse should have a manageable mouth. For if a horse's hind legs are well put on, his mouth depends almost entirely on the skill and judgment of the breaker. It ought to be sensible to the slightest touch. The ear of the horse has been well said to lay in his bridle. From the insensible quality of his hoofs, he has no active sense of touch, and therefore no safe guide but the bit, so that to ride a horse with a bad mouth is a very perilous proceeding. In hunting it is particularly so, for he can never be prevented from rushing at his fences, or through gates, and is very likely to jump on any one who may be in a little difficulty in front of him on the landing side of a fence. He will also tire himself and his rider twice as soon as if he went pleasantly in hand. Bits may indeed do something for a hard puller, and many have been invented. The best, if chosen with good judgment, according to the peculiarities of the horses to wear them, are: 1, the Chiffney; 2, the Gag; 3, the Bentineck; 4, the Hanover; 5, the Secunda; 6, the Bucephalus Noseband; and 7 (for horses with dry outstretched tongues), the Iron Duke. A clever adaptation by our trainer's son of the lip strap to the port carb bit, was shown to us; which seemed both humane and effectual. But if a horse's mouth has been roughly handled and spoiled by the breaker, a man might as well get astride a steam-engine at full speed, and try to stop it by pulling at the hand-rail, as trust to any bit or bridle whatever.

"I tell you what, sir," said our booted and spurred Mentor, heartily, "it's of no use thinking of trying to teach a horse, or any other animal, without kindness and good temper. Cruelty breeds resistance; but proper severity breeds obedience. The horse must not be treated with disrespect. He is a high-spirited animal, and feels every sensation of pleasure and pain most keen. Horses should be specially taught the sort of work they are expected to do. Now look at this hunter!"

A light-built, gay-looking thorough-bred was passing into a paddock for a lesson in jumping over a swivel bush hurdle. Without spur or whip, the rider—the horse-breaker's son—rode the mare steadily at the fence, and she went over without touching a top twig, clearing nine yards in the leap.

"The great thing, sir, is to bring into workman-like ways; not to be fussy and flurried at their fences; and to take good measure in their paces, so as to take off at the right spot." Then he went on to inform us that hunters should be carefully handled at a very early age, if they are intended to become temperate and handy. They may be ridden gently by a light weight with good hands, at three years old, over small fences. At four they ought to be shown hounds; but they should only be allowed to follow them at a distance, after the fences are broken down; for if you put them to large leaps at that age, they are apt to get alarmed, and never make steady fences afterwards. Above all things, avoid getting them into boggy ditches; or riding them at brooks; but they should be practised at leaping small ditches, if possible, with water in them, the rider facing them at a brisk gallop, for this gives a horse confidence and courage. The old custom of teaching colts to leap, standing, over a bar is now obsolete, and they are taught to become timber-jumpers simply by taking timber as it comes across country—the present rate of hounds gives no time for standing leaps. The circular bar, however, is not a bad thing, if in a good place, and well managed. Every description of fence that your hunter is likely to meet with should be placed within a prescribed circle on soft ground, the man who holds him standing on a stage in the centre. Another man, following the colt with a whip, obliges him to clear his fences at a certain pace, and in a very short time a good-tempered colt will go at his jumps with pleasure.

Here let me observe—for the conversation had ended—that no matter how carefully a hunter may have been trained, until you taste and try him in the field, it is hard to say whether the right stuff be in him. The best judges are often deceived by outsides and school performances. A few general rules may, however, be given, which will be found of certain application. In a hilly country, for instance, nothing has a chance against a pure thorough-bred. Lengthy horses always make the best jumpers, if they have good hind quarters, good loins, and good courage. Extraordinary things have been done by such horses. In 1829, Dick Christian jumped thirty-three feet on King of the Valley; and Captain Littler's horse, Chandler, cleared thirty-nine feet over a brook at Leamington. The most dangerous of all horses in the field is a stargazer. A hunter should carry his head low, as by so doing he is less liable to fall, and gives his rider a firmer seat. All wild horses lower their crests in leaping. It is, however, the peculiar excellence of going well through dirt which decides the real value of a horse for our best hunting counties. To find out this quality, he must be ridden fair and straight. If he finish on soft ground, he is of no use.

No matter how wide a horse may be, if he is not deep in the girth he cannot carry weight, and is very seldom a good-winded horse, even

under a light man. One of the best things that can be said of a hunter is, that at first sight he appears two inches lower than he really is. Short-legged horses leap better and safer than long-legged cattle, and go faster and further under hard riders.

Horses with straight hinder legs never can have good mouths. He should have well-placed hinder legs, with wide hips, well-spread gaskins, as much as possible of the vis à tergo, well-knit joints, short cannon bone, oblique pasterns, and largish feet. The bone of a hunter's hock cannot be too long. These are the points for strength and bottom. "Handsome is as handsome does," and an old whip once said to a nobleman who remarked that his staunch old horse who had carried him through so many troubles had an awkward head: "Never mind his 'ed, my lord; I ain't a-going to ride on his 'ed." Indeed, what is called the perfect model horse is by no means the best. A horse's constitution may be too good. Horses of a very hard nature, and very closely ribbed up, are large feeders with great barrels, and do not make brilliant hunters. They require so much work to keep them in place and wind, that their legs suffer, and often give way when their constitution is in its prime. Horses with moderate carcasses last much longer, and, provided they are good feeders, are usually bright and lasting enough, if otherwise well shaped. Finally, a hunter should be well seasoned. Few five-year-old horses are fit to carry a gentleman across country; for he cannot be sufficiently experienced to take a straight line.

About fifteen hands two inches is the best height for a hunter. His action should be smooth, or it cannot last. The movement of the fore legs should be round, not high; the horse should be quick on his legs, as well as fast.—It was now time to go.

"Good-bye, Mr. Hawkes" (for such, as Pepys's contemporaries would have written, is our hero's name); "but," we add, taking a last look at the picturesque old house, and thinking of the buried treasure, "do you ever find any old coins in your garden?"

Mr. Hawkes does not believe that money ever grew in his garden; but his wife speedily produces "three old halfpennies, sir, that we found digging the potatoes last year."

A little pocket-file removes the rust of two centuries, and something like pure gold appears beneath.

"Wash them well in strong vinegar, and look at them again," was my advice.

"Would you like to have them, sir?" says Mrs. Hawkes, with a blush of hesitation which would have become a duchess.

"Why, no, thank you; but, if they do turn out to be gold, it is just possible that they may have once belonged to a certain Mr. Pepys."

The evening shadows lengthen along the grass; the mist begins to rise where the land lies very low. I must go, but not until I have mounted one of the trainer's pupils.

A game young horse comes up, sniffing the

wind, and looking kindly at a fence leading into the field.

"Does he bridle well, Mr. Hawkes?"

"Perfectly!"

And he does; he goes quite quietly at his fence, takes me over without hanging; an ounce on the bit, and then to the Huntingdon station.

So I return to London, more satisfied than ever that kindness is the best teacher, horse or man, the wide world over, and pleased enough with my holiday.

THE SPIRIT OF YOUTH.

'Twas night; perchance the shadows deep my wondering sense beguiled:

Methought, amid the firelight gleams, like to a soul-clad child,

A gentle spirit rose and stood before my face and smiled.

Its lambent eyes had all the glow of life's first spring-like tide,

And thus I knew, full surely knew, though long ago it died,

I and my buried youth were standing friendly side by side.

No grace was gone, no touch of time had dimmed the fearless glance;

The tireless footstep swept the floor like to a floating dance;

And I felt the clear, shrill, flute-like voice strike through me as a lance.

Yet, but for one soft, fitful touch of pain all sudden thrown

From brow and eye to tender lip, like cloud on sunlit down,

So glad this soul of youth, I had not known it for my own.

"Send forth," it cried, "thy new-born grief to walk the world with me,

Nor bind it captive to thy breast, a slave that would be free;

If but it followeth where I go, all shall be well with thee.

"Thou mad'st of me a sorrow once, when I was rash and fair;

Thou mak'st of me a sorrow now that whitens all thine hair,

Because, deep-searching in thy heart, thou find'st I dwell not there.

"My spirit is about thee still: thou callest, and I rise,

Despair shall conquer not while thou beneath these spirit eyes

Walk pure the dark ways of the earth when all its daylight dies.

"Thou saw'st me go in anguish once: I come once more to trace

If yet thine heart may courage draw from looking on my face;

For sorrow on the front of youth it bath a strange dead grace.

"I would have made a lovely life for thee, but all in vain;
And still I feel—a spirit now—the stirrings of thy pain:
I am the only grief of thine shall ever come again.

"Thy late-born woes have followed me; but all their tears lie shed:
The grace of Heaven their sobbing stills; and to a restful bed
One after other forth they go with a most silent tread."

The gentle spirit turned and stole with noiseless foot away:
A sudden sunbeam cleaved the sky with a quick upward ray;
The shadows passed from earth and heart, and once more it was day.

So now amid the deepening glooms I sit and muse no more,
But set the captive sorrow free, and, throwing wide life's door,
See it tread the quiet footsteps of the sorrows gone before.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

THE GLORIOUS FIRST OF JUNE.

IN 1793, England declared war against the French Republic, and on the 14th of July, Lord Howe, only twelve months before appointed Vice-Admiral of England on the death of Lord Rodney, set sail from St. Helen's with twenty-three sail of the line, in two divisions. The old admiral's orders were to prevent the junction of the fleets of Brest with those of L'Orient and Rochefort, and to intercept, if possible, either the Jamaica, Lisbon, or American convoys.

Lord Howe, generally known to his sailors by the nickname of "Black Dick," from his dark complexion, and also from a sooty foreign mezzotint of himself that hung in his state cabin, had seen much service. He had begun life under Anson; he had distinguished himself in the West Indies; at the disastrous affair at Quiberon Bay he had fought like one of Homer's heroes to cover the retreating troops; he had helped to raise the siege of Gibraltar, when Elliot had long held the rock against enormous odds; he had all but destroyed Cherbourg; lastly, he had done brave duty in America, and finally returned home to serve his country, under Pitt, as one of the most conscientious First Lords ever known. Worn by long vigils and fatigue of brain and sinew, buffeted by the storms of many oceans, an old man of sixty-nine, gouty and longing for the quiet of home, Lord Howe was still the old sea lion, determined to do his duty, eager to fight, and resolved to beat. From the middle of July to the end of December, Lord Howe remained at sea, tormented by constant gales, which crippled his half worn-out ships, and only relieved by an occasional glimpse of the enemy. Time after time, to the old warrior's infinite mortification, he had to put back into Torbay to refit his disabled

vessels. He was strongly opposed to the system of blockade in all weathers, considering it left the blockading ships in a debilitated condition to resist the enemy's fleet fresh from its long holiday; he thought it disheartening to the men and costly to the nation. The English people are as impatient of suspense, as the Romans were of the cautious policy of Fabius. The merchants were satisfied so the French privateers were sealed up in port, and their own convoys could pass up and down the Channel; but the mob wanted a heavy blow struck. They complained that Howe was getting old and timid; they sneered at the perpetual returns to port. The wits grew cruel in their desire to appear clever. The favourite joke was that Caesar's great despatch was contained in three words—"Veni, vidi, vici," but that of Howe's might be written in one—"Vidi"—which was heartless enough; but Mr. Pitt, inflexible, with that arrogant nose of his sniffing the air, would listen to no complaints against the old sailor. He knew his man. The truth was, Howe did not want to bar the Frenchman's door; he wanted him, on the contrary, to come out, so that he might smash him. His scout frigates could report the slightest movement at Brest or Rochefort; he would then slip the leashes of his hounds, and dash from Torbay upon the foe. Still the vulgar cry was that Howe was worn out, and that the shelf was a better place for him now than the seaman's berth. The opposition newspapers, eager for Fox and Lord North, were all for putting Howe among the yellow (superannuated) admirals.

On May 2, 1794, Lord Howe left St. Helen's, and put to sea with twenty-two sail of the line and six frigates; his two vice-admirals being Hood and Graves; his rear-admirals, Pasley, Caldwell, Bowyer, and Gardner. At the Lizard, Howe despatched Rear-Admiral Montague with a detached squadron (not included in the above number) of six ships of the line and four frigates to attend the convoys, in the parallel of Cape Finisterre. Howe's main fleet then pushed on for Ushant.

On the deck of the Charlotte, watching the minutest manœuvre of the vessels, marking even a neglected rope or an ill-cut sail, was constantly seen the tall, dark, stern, hard-featured old admiral, who seemed so shy and cold and severe and reserved to those who did not know his real warmth of heart and his kind and benevolent disposition. The foxes soon began to show, and the scent ran high. The stars were in favourable conjunction for England. Three French frigates were first seen lurking about the western entrance of Brest. Every eye was soon on the alert, from the admiral's to the smallest powder-monkey's, eager as fox-hunters for the thrilling cry of "Stole away." Three reconnoitring frigates came back to the hero in the evening, and reported that one French ship of the line, two frigates, and two brigs, had been seen at anchor in Camaret Bay, and that twenty-two large vessels were huddled together inside the Goulet. The weather continued vexa-

tiously foggy and blowing. The fleet continued cruising southward of Ushant, to try and intercept the great convoy expected from North America and the West Indies. On the 29th, being close in with Ushant, the admiral sent two frigates, the *Latona* and *Phaeton*, covered by the *Leviathan* and *Cæsar*, through the Trone passage to look into Brest. They looked in boldly, but to their vexation discovered the French fleet had gone. An American vessel soon reported that they had sailed on the 17th—twenty-four ships of the line and ten frigates—their object being to guard the valuable West India homeward-bound convoy. On that day, two French corvettes—the *Républicain* (eighteen) and the *Inconnu* (twelve)—steered towards the fleet, mistaking it for their own. They were instantly taken and destroyed, as there was no time to send them into an English port. The admiral, having thus bagged his first birds, calmly and confidently stood under easy sail to the northward, being sure that the enemy's chief station would be between the parallels of forty-five degrees and forty-seven degrees thirty minutes. On the morning of the 28th, the advance frigates saw several French ships far to the south-east, the wind then blowing stiff from the south-west.

The enemy was watched during that May night, and at daybreak he hove larger, the wind being still fresh from the south-south-west, and a head sea on from the southward. The fleet was then put on the larboard tack, in order to get a few shots at the enemy's rear. A few random long shots were fired in this way. The French then, in imitation of us, wore their van in succession. About ten o'clock he hauled to the wind, and opened fire on the *Cæsar*, *Queen*, *Russell*, and other vessels in our front, trying to disable them, and, by a blow on the head, to stun us and check our pursuit.

The centre of the British fleet drawing fast up with the van, the signal was repeatedly made for the *Cæsar*, leading the line and then under treble-reefed topsails and foresail, to make more sail. In letting the third reef out, her main-topsail split, and it became necessary to bend another. But, as she did not set her mainsail, the centre and rear of the fleet were obliged to shorten sail; and the *Cæsar* dropped to leeward for want of sufficient headway.

The chase continued all day, the French edging down shyly to random-shot distance, then hauling the wind, and firing as they drew ahead. Lord Howe, fearing his van might suffer from their scattered but constantly renewed fire, thought fit to tack the fleet in succession, in order to drive through some part of the enemy's squadron to windward. At noon, the signals for which Howe was anxious were made in the lulls of firing, to charge through the enemy's line. Howe had them now.

Unfortunately the crews were raw, the captains were inexperienced. They betrayed an utter incapacity of manœuvring together, or piercing the enemy's line, and each one engaging his adversary to leeward. Soon after one o'clock,

the *Cæsar*, *Queen*, *Orion*, and *Invincible* were observed to be about on the starboard tack; and the *Cæsar* and *Queen* disappointing the staunch old admiral, Howe, in his prompt and decisive way, instantly tacked his vessel, the *Charlotte* (the tenth from the van), and struck through the French line between the fifth and sixth ships of their rear. He then tacked again, and bore down from to windward, but followed only by the *Bellerophon* and *Leviathan*. The enemy wore in succession, to protect three of their disabled vessels.

Howe in vain signalled to his confused ships to form in line. They came up huddled together, presenting a tempting mark to the French gunners; but the French were quite content to cover their winged vessels, to fire at a safe distance, and to wear to the westward; and Howe, keeping the weathergage, drove steadily after them.

The two next days were foggy; but the wind went down, the head sea abated, and from time to time the enemy's sails showed to the north-west. Soon after noon, on the 31st, the fog melted off, and the twenty-six French vessels were seen to leeward. They were forming in order of battle as Howe's fleet advanced abreast of them; but it was too late to fight comfortably that day, so Howe sent out his observation frigates, and waited anxiously for the warm summer morning that was to welcome June.

June 1st showed the French about three or four miles to leeward, in order of battle, and under easy sail to the westward. Howe, having found his captains unable to pierce the enemy's line and engage to leeward, gave the simpler and more bull-dog order to go straight at their throats; i.e. each ship to steer for and engage the ship opposed to her in the enemy's line, throttle it, and pound it deaf and dumb as soon as possible. Our fleet bore up soon after nine. After a quiet half-hour given the men for breakfast, our fleet bore down on the French as calmly as if our vessels were coming to an anchor.

As the *Charlotte* was advancing towards the French line with a determination to pass through it, it appeared so close and compact that Lord Howe expressed a doubt whether there was room to pass between the *Montagne*, of one hundred and twenty guns, and the *Jacobin*, of eighty, which had stretched partly under the lee of the former, as if afraid of the *Charlotte's* broadside, thus occupying the place it was intended the *Charlotte* should take. Lord Howe, however, was determined to pass through, or run on board the enemy's flag-ship or the *Jacobin*; on which Bowen, blunt and resolute, called out, "That's right, my lord; the *Charlotte* will make room for herself." On his first appointment to the *Queen Charlotte*, this unpolished but shrewd and clever seaman had been in the habit, in addressing the commander-in-chief, or replying to his questions, of frequently, almost constantly, using the expression "my lord." One day Lord Howe said to him, "Bowen, pray, my good fellow, do give over that eternal 'my

lord,' 'my lord'; don't you know I am called 'Black Dick' in the fleet?"

Just as the Charlotte was closing with the Montagne, Lord Howe, who was himself conning the ship, called out to Bowen to starboard the helm; to which Bowen remarked, that if they did so she would be on board the next ship, the Jacobin: to this his lordship replied, sharply, "What is that to you, sir?" Bowen, a little nettled, said, in an under tone, "D—n me if I care, if *you* don't; I'll go near enough to singe some of our whiskers."

It was, they say, a sight to remember, to see the old admiral sweeping down on the French line, brushing on the one side the ensign of the flag-ship of Rear-Admiral Villaret Joyeuse, and grazing, on the other hand, with the jib-boom of the Charlotte, the mizen-shrouds of the Jacobin. She would certainly have either sunk or captured the Montagne had not her fore-topmast been shot away. Just as the French admiral's fire had ceased, our main-topmast fell over the side, which gave the Montagne the opportunity of making off to leeward, without the possibility of the Charlotte's following her. The Frenchman's hull was completely damaged; the tremendous broadside poured into her stern as the Charlotte was passing through the line, made a hole large enough, as one of the sailors said, to row the admiral's barge through.

The Defence, Marlborough, Royal George, Queen, and Brunswick were the only English ships that broke the enemy's line in the admiral's grand manner, and engaging the French to leeward. The Gibraltar blundered, and the Cæsar's main-topsail was backed at the very moment the signal for close engagement was abroad. Our ships were old, and many of them bad sailers. The French rear-guard, dreading our charge, closed upon their van in such a compact mass that the captains dared not strike on it; only the admiral and five captains let their ships "make their own way." Some mistook the directions, our signal system being still in its infancy. Others presumed on the conditional order to engage either to windward or leeward, according to circumstances.

Captain G. Berkeley fought the Marlborough like a hero. He engaged the Impétueux for a hot twenty minutes, shot tearing through sails and rigging, crashing through bulwarks and bulkheads, and ripping deck planks, spars, and balustrades. The Impétueux, soon having enough of it, paid round off, and dropped with her bowsprit over the Marlborough's quarter, where she lay exposed to a heavy raking fire, that drove every one from the Frenchman's decks. The sailors of the Marlborough were cool, obedient, brave and frolicsome as boys. Some of the men leaped on board the Frenchman, but were called back.

As one of the sailors was going to leap over, a comrade called after him to take a cutlass. This he refused, saying "he should find one there;" and, on being called back, actually returned with two of the enemy's cutlasses in his hands.

Presently the Frenchman's masts, one after the other, crashed over her side, and Captain Berkeley was wounded.

Lieutenant Monckton now commanded. In his despatch he says: *and I then at 4 o'clock*

"At this time we were laying along the Impétueux, within pistol-shot; and, finding that she did not return a gun, and perceiving she was on fire, I ordered our ship to cease firing at her, and suffered them quietly to extinguish the flames, which I could easily have prevented with our musketry. While clearing away the wreck, the rear of the enemy's fleet was coming up, and perceiving that they must range close to us, and being determined never to see the British flag struck, I ordered the men to lie down at their quarters to receive their fire, and to return it afterwards if possible; but, being dismasted, she rolled so deep that our lower-deck ports could not be opened. The event was as I expected; the enemy's rear passed us to leeward very close, and we fairly ran the gauntlet of every ship which could get a gun to bear, but luckily without giving us any shot between wind and water, or killing any men, except two who imprudently disobeyed their officers and got up at their quarters. Two of their ships, which had tacked, now came to windward of us, and gave us their fire, upon which one of their hulks hoisted a national flag, but upon our firing some guns at her she hauled it down again; and a three-decker, having tacked also, stood towards us, with a full intention, I believe, to sink us if possible: the Royal George, however, who I suppose had tacked after her, came up, and, engaging her very closely, carried away her main and mizen masts, and saved the Marlborough from the intended close attack. I then made the signal for assistance on a boat's mast; but this was almost instantly shot away. At five the Aquilon took us in tow, and soon after we joined the fleet."

During the rough time that the Marlborough went through after her fierce duel with the Impétueux, her deadly grapple with the French admiral, and her being battered by half the French fleet, the men on one occasion seeing the captain down, the second lieutenant, Sir Michael Seymour, with his arm shot off, and the old ship riddled and shattered with the unceasing fire, began to grumble, and there was a mutter about surrender; but Lieutenant Monckton, overhearing it, swore that she should never surrender, and that he would nail her colours to the stump of the mast. At this moment a cock, having by the wreck been liberated from his broken coop, suddenly perched himself on the stump of the mainmast, clapped his wings, and crowed aloud; in an instant three hearty cheers rang throughout the ship's company, and there was no more talk of surrender. On the arrival of the ship at Plymouth, the gallant and prophetic cock, that had saved the ship, was given by Captain Berkeley to Lord George Lennox, the governor of the town. The cock lived to a good old age, and, while the Marlborough remained at Plymouth,

was daily visited by parties of the Marlborough's sailors.

The spirit of our seamen was heroic. On board the *Queen* and *Invincible*, the sailors who had their arms taken off in the engagement of the 29th went into the cockpit on the 1st of June, to assist the surgeons and encourage the poor men who were to submit to the same operation, by declaring it was much less painful than it appeared to be, and that they felt no pain from the wounds.

The *Defence*, Captain Gambier, behaved most gallantly, was terribly cut up, and totally dismasted; she was one of the few that passed through the enemy's line, got into the midst of the French ships, and lost her main and mizen masts. At the close of the action, Captain Pakenham, a rattling, good-humoured Irishman, hailed him from the *Invincible*, "Well, Jimmy, I see you are pretty well mauled; but never mind, Jimmy, whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."

The *Invincible* (Pakenham) also did bravely, running amuck among the astonished French, and striking with both hands as he ran the gauntlet. Pakenham, having fired away in a very rude style on one of the French men-of-war, and observing they did not answer the compliment in the manner he expected, stopped his fire, and desired to know if the ship had struck. On being answered they had not, he hallooed out, in great rage, "Then, d—n ye, why do you not fire?" Remarking that one of the enemy's ships had shot away the topmasts of one commanded by his particular friend, Pakenham declared with an oath, "I'll pay you for that;" and, bearing down on the Frenchman, he gave him a broadside for the affront offered to his comrade. After the action of the 29th, he sent word to Lord Howe that his men and guns were quite ready for another touch, but they must tow him into the line, for his ship would not stir, and then he would do his duty.

Captain Harvey, in the *Brunswick* (seventy-four) fought the *Vengeur* (seventy-four) with a good-natured courage that nothing could quell. Lord Howe had placed Harvey's ship next his own, as a token of his esteem. One of the bower anchors of the *Brunswick* being shot away, the cable ran out its whole length, and the ship, in sounding, fell close alongside of the *Vengeur*, still full of fight. The brave captain of the *Brunswick* received two shots in his arm before he left the deck to have it amputated, in consequence of a third wound. His brother, Captain Henry Harvey, in the *Ramilles*, seeing the *Brunswick* beset by three French ships at one time, bore down between the enemy and his brother, to draw off their fire. A fine bit of sailor's dry humour and naïveté was shown during this fight. The *Brunswick* had a large figure-head of the duke, with a laced hat on. The hat was struck off by a shot in the battle. The crew of the *Brunswick*, thinking it a degradation that a prince of that house should continue to be uncovered in face of the enemy, sent a deputation to the quarter-deck

to request that Captain Harvey would be pleased to order his servant to give them his laced cocked-hat to supply the loss. The good-humoured captain complied, and the carpenter nailed it on the duke's head, where it remained till the battle was finished. The *Ramilles* poured such a revengeful and crushing fire into the *Vengeur*, that she went to the bottom with three hundred and twenty men, just as the battle was over, and her officers were removing her prisoners to the *Ramilles* and the *Brunswick*.

When the *Sans Pareil* was taken possession of, Captain Troubridge was found on board as a prisoner, having been captured in the *Castor*, when in charge of the Newfoundland convoy. On the morning of the 1st of June, the French officers, seeing the British fleet under easy sail, going parallel to the French line, taunted him by saying "there will be no fighting to-day: your admiral will not venture down." "Wait a little," said Troubridge; "English sailors never like to fight with empty stomachs. I see the signal flying for all hands to breakfast; after which, take my word for it, they will pay you a visit." When the *Sans Pareil* had got enough of the battle, and was prepared to surrender, her captain sent down to request Troubridge would come upon deck and do him the honour to strike her colours: an honour which he thought fit to decline.

The *Audacious*, a small seventy-four (Captain Parker), impinging on the *Révolutionnaire*, a large three-decker, as a smartly shot small marble drives a big "bonze" out of the ring, struck it out of the line, and stuck to her enemy all night and all the next day, keeping up a pertinacious fight, and clinging to her like a terrier to a mad bull. Captain Parker in his despatch says:

"At this time his mizen-mast was gone by the board; his lower-yards and main-topsail-yard shot away: he fell athwart our bows; but we separated without being entangled; he then directed his course before the wind. When the enemy separated from athwart our bows, the company of his Majesty's ship under my command gave three cheers, from the idea, taken from the people quartered forward, that his colours were struck. This I cannot myself take upon me to say, though I think it likely, from his situation obliging him to pass through or near to our line; but certain it is he was completely beaten: his fire slackened towards the latter part of the action, and the last broadside (the ships' sides almost touching each other) he sustained without returning more than the fire of two or three guns."

At daybreak the people of the *Audacious* saw, to their bitter disgust, nine sail of the enemy's ships three miles to windward. Thus she lost her prize, and, disabled as her rigging was, she would certainly have fallen into the hands of the French, had not some friendly rain and fog spread between them, and enabled the *Audacious* to slip back to Plymouth.

All this time the old admiral stood upon the poop of the *Queen Charlotte*, undaunted amid

such a whirlwind of cannon shot and musket bullets that it seemed only a miracle could preserve him from death. All around him guns were thundering, fire flaming, masts falling as thick as trees in a forest when the woodmen are clearing, men were dying at his very feet. Still the old lion held on to his purpose, and struck hard at the Montagne, a ship eight hundred tons bigger than his own. It was only an unlucky shot, taking away the topmast of the admiral's vessel, that prevented his carrying the enemy, after having long before beaten her guns dumb.

Our victory had been dearly bought. The number of killed in the British fleet was two hundred and seventy-nine; of wounded, eight hundred and seventy-seven: making a total of one thousand one hundred and fifty-six. In the six of the enemy's captured ships the killed were six hundred and ninety; wounded, five hundred and eighty: total, one thousand two hundred and seventy; besides three hundred and twenty who went down in the Vengeur. The number of prisoners removed is stated at two thousand three hundred; the total number in the six captured ships could not be less than five thousand. The six prizes were the *Le Juste* (eighty), *Sans Pareil* (eighty), *L'America* (seventy-four), *L'Achille* (seventy-four), *Le Northumberland* (seventy-four), and the *L'Impétueux* (seventy-four). The French eighty-gun ships were all ten feet longer than our first-rates, and some inches wider; the whole French fleet had four hundred and seventy guns more than our own, and those of a much larger calibre. Their ships were many of them new; ours weather-beaten, and, for the most part, half worn out. Lord Howe has been much blamed for letting five of the disabled French ships escape—some under sprit-sails and others by towing—when, with dash and energy, they might have been captured, and the defeat made more crushing and final. Sir John Barrow, Howe's biographer, confesses that five flag officers (at that time lieutenants in the English squadron) gave their opinion that the crippled ships might have been and ought to have been captured.

The blame is generally thrown on Sir Roger Curtis, who, seeing our vessels scattered, seems to have feared a renewed charge from the nine least injured French vessels. But there were still eight English seventy-fours with scarcely a scratch on them, and one of these, the *Thunderer*, had not had a man killed nor wounded. The simple truth is, that Lord Howe (sixty-nine years old) was physically and mentally worn out with his three days' fighting, and had no stamina left to organise a hot and continued pursuit.

The two next days were spent in repairing rigging, bandaging wounded masts, removing the five thousand prisoners, and taking the six prizes in tow. Fair weather smiled on the victorious fleet, and light western breezes wafted it home to Spithead. Some of the vessels were sent to Plymouth under Admiral

Graves to be refitted. Crowds of people hurried to Portsmouth to see the captured ships arrive, dragged at the heels of our battered vessels. Shortly after the return of the *Charlotte* to Portsmouth, Lord Howe sent for the first lieutenant, Larcom. "Mr. Larcom," he said, sternly, "your conduct in the action has been such that it is necessary you should leave this ship." Larcom, who was as brave as his admiral, a good officer and seaman, was thunder-struck, and, with tears in his eyes, exclaimed, "What have I done? Why am I to leave the ship? I have done my duty to the utmost of my power." "Very true, sir," said Lord Howe; "but leave this ship you must—and I have great pleasure in presenting you with this commission as commander (of some other ship) for your conduct on the late occasion."

Some time after the battle, a deputation of the petty officers and seamen requested Bowen to ask Lord Howe if they might have the gratification of congratulating his lordship on the victory he had gained, and of thanking him for having led them so gloriously into battle. On receiving them on the quarter-deck, Lord Howe himself being on the front of the poop, was so affected that he could only say, with a faltering voice, and his eyes glistening with tears, "No, no, I thank you; it is you, my brave lads—it is you, not I, that have conquered." The honest and blunt Bowen, in telling this to a friend, said, "I could myself have cried most heartily to see the veteran hero so affected."

Haughty, inflexible, and cold as the Howes were always considered, the admiral well earned his honourable name of "the sailor's friend." After the engagement, his secretary says he was accustomed to go down below and cheer the wounded men, sitting by their hammocks, and ordering the surgeon to use his wines and live stock at his own discretion.

Lord Howe gave some offence to the fleet by what was considered the unprecedented and unjust omission in his despatches of the names of thirteen of his captains. Howe thought it invidious to particularise. Captain Molloy, of the *Cæsar*, much to Howe's vexation, demanded a court-martial, which pronounced his personal courage unimpeachable, but dismissed him from the command of the *Cæsar*. Collingwood, who was violent when he felt injustice, was captain of the *Barfleur*; his commander, Rear-Admiral Bowyer, being wounded an hour after the battle began, he had fought the ship the whole day, and yet his name was omitted in the *Gazette*. He succeeded, however, a few years afterwards, in obtaining the medal for this victory. After the gallant action of Sir John Jervis, off Cape St. Vincent, he was told by the admiral that he was set down for one of the medals to be distributed on that occasion; his answer was, he could not accept of one while that for the 1st of June was withheld. "I feel," said he, "that I was then improperly passed over, and to receive such a distinction now would be to acknowledge the propriety of

that injustice." Soon after this, the *two* medals were transmitted to Collingwood by Lord Spencer, with a civil apology for some delay in sending that for the 1st of June. Nine captains were made rear-admirals of the blue; Graves and Hood were created barons; and Bowyer, Gardner, and Pasley, baronets.

The nation was brimming over with joy, pride, and gratitude—the king more than any one. He was always fond of the Howes, and claimed them as distant kinsmen. He wrote the following autograph letter to the earl's sister:

"Windsor, 11th of June, 1794.

"Mrs. Howe's zeal for the great cause in which this country is engaged, added to her becoming ardour for the glory of her family, must make her feel with redoubled joy the glorious news brought by Sir Roger Curtis; she will, I hope, be satisfied now that *Earl Richard* has, with twenty-five sail of the line, attacked twenty-six of the enemy, taken six, and sunk two: besides, it is not improbable that some of the disabled ships of the enemy may not be able to reach their own shore. I own I could not refrain from expressing my sentiments on the occasion, but will not detain her by adding more.

(Signed) "GEORGE R."

Howe was promised a blue ribbon. He received the order of the Garter, and declined a marquissate. His sprightly daughter, writing to her sister, Lady Altamont, says:

"It would amuse you to hear the titles which the officers wish my father to have, as they choose him to be a marquis; though some of the sailors when disputing on this point the other day, one of them was heard to say, 'A marquis, you blockhead, the king must make him one of the blood royal!'"

Howe received the freedom of the City and of several of the companies in gold boxes, and he obtained the thanks of both Houses of Parliament. The men who did the real work got their usual halfpence—about three guineas each. About ten thousand pounds was subscribed off-hand at Lloyd's, for the widows, children, and wounded sailors.

On the 20th of June, the king, queen, and three princesses came to Portsmouth, and went in a boat procession to dine on board the Queen Charlotte. On the quarter-deck the king presented Lord Howe with a sword set with diamonds, and a gold chain and medal. Sir Roger Curtis and Admirals Hood and Gardner also received gold chains. All the sailors of the Queen Charlotte requested to touch the sword, and it was then sent round the whole fleet for the crews to see it. At dinner the king himself proposed the toast:

"May the great admiral long command the Queen Charlotte, and may she long be an example to future fleets."

The old admiral did not keep much longer at sea. He lived to praise Nelson, Duncan, Bridport, and Jervis, to rejoice at the battle of the Nile,

and by good sense and kindness to suppress the dangerous mutinies of 1797. He died of gout in 1799.

MABEL'S PROGRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

CHAPTER VIII. EXPLANATORY.

JACK's unremitting exertions, guided by the practical common sense and single-mindedness which he inherited from his mother, had succeeded in discovering Walter Charlewood's whereabouts. The clue afforded by poor Corda's letter, which led to the detection of her brother's anonymous calumnies, had set Jack thinking of Alfred Trescott. It had not been difficult to discover, on inquiry, that Alfred had been a frequent associate and companion of Walter during a great part of the time that the Charlewoods had passed in London.

"The idea of seeking any information about my brother from young Trescott never entered my head," said Clement, when Jack uttered his opinion that it might be well to set a watch on Alfred, as a means of tracing the missing Walter. "I did not even know that they had met since we came to town."

"No; I dare say not," said Jack, "but that is not hard to account for, is it? Your brother knew pretty well, I suppose, that that double-distilled young scoundrel was not exactly the sort of companion you would approve of for him."

"True. And I had often warned Walter against associating with him in days gone by. My brother is so easily influenced by those around him."

"Exactly so. And you may depend that Trescott impressed upon your brother the desirableness of not mentioning his name to you. But I have a strong notion that if anybody in London knows where your brother is at this minute, Alfred Trescott is the man; and as it clearly would be of no use to question that very amiable young gentleman, I think the best way will be to watch where he goes to, and whom he sees. We shall find out something so, depend on it."

In the pursuance of this line of conduct, Jack found an invaluable ally in old Jerry Shaw, who threw himself into the business with great zeal. By his assistance, and that of Lingo, with whom Jerry said the whole credit of the discovery ought rightfully to rest, Jack soon found out that young Trescott had been seen with a gentleman answering to Walter Charlewood's description in a tavern not far from the neighbourhood inhabited by the fair Mrs. Hutchins. That lady, with a rat-like instinct, began to divine that misfortune and disgrace were hanging over the head of her "poetical" and high-minded young friend, Alfred Trescott, and she consequently became very pliant in Jack's hands, imparting a great deal that she

knew to Alfred's disadvantage, and a vast deal more that she did *not* know, with her accustomed florid eloquence. The truth was, that Mrs. Hutchins (to whom Jerry Shaw presented Jack as a cousin of "Miss Bell," and at the same time a friend of Mr. Charlewood) began to have sundry misgivings as to the policy of her violent animosity to Clement and the scandal she had spoken of him to Betty. If Mr. Charlewood were still on good terms with Mabel, it might be no passport to the favour of the latter to abuse him; and a good or bad word from Miss Bell was important to a person employed as Mrs. Hutchins was in the Thespian Theatre. By Clement's consent, Jack and Mr. Shaw undertook to induce Walter to return home with them, thinking that a stranger's face would be less likely to startle the truant than the sight of his brother arriving unexpectedly. They accordingly watched Alfred enter and leave the tavern, and immediately on his departure made their way to Walter, with what result the reader knows.

It is needless to speak of Mrs. Charlewood's joy over her re-found boy, or of the relief of mind to Clement and Penelope at finding their brother alive and safe, although looking broken and abject. For the first two days after his return home, Walter did not recover either his health or his self-possession sufficiently to face Clement and Penelope. He shut himself in his own room, on the excuse—but too well founded—of indisposition, and refused to see any one except his mother, who left her own sick-bed to tend him. But by degrees, as he became aware of the forbearing kindness which actuated all around him, a spring of good feeling and gratitude was touched in his weak but not wholly depraved nature, and he began to come amongst the family again, and even to make some approach towards asking pardon for the suffering he had caused them, and to promise amendment. In his heart, spite of all he had said to Alfred Trescott, he was inexpressibly thankful to have been compelled, as it were, to return home without making the first advances towards a reconciliation himself. He told himself and told his mother that within four-and-twenty hours of the time when Jack surprised him in a drunken slumber on the tavern bed, he should have been aboard an emigrant ship, and on his way to Australia. But at the bottom of his conscience he well knew that it would not have been so. Clement had one interview with his brother alone, and what passed between them he never fully disclosed to any one; but the two chief points spoken of were the discovery of Alfred's secret and malignant enmity, and the project discussed between Clement and his sister Penelope, of applying to old Stephens on Walter's behalf. Walter caught at the idea of going abroad, and even added a postscript to Clement's letter, begging the old clerk (in a strain of very unwonted candour and humility) to hold out a helping hand to him, and promising solemnly not to dishonour his recommendation.

To Jack Walton, as he called himself, the whole family were extremely grateful, and the singular circumstances of his first introduction to them made an intimacy arise between them with peculiar rapidity. "But, after all, we owe it to Mabel Earnshaw, first and foremost, that I have got my boy back again," said Mrs. Charlewood, staunchly. She had never relinquished her old liking for Mabel, although the fact of the latter's having gone on the stage continued to be, theoretically, an unforgiven sin. It was at Mabel's intercession, and in deference to Mabel's pleadings, that Corda was spared any questioning as to what she knew of her brother's anonymous writings. The fact that the child had written the note to Mr. McCulloch, justifying Clement against the evil that had been said of him, could not be doubted; and once on the right track, a thousand pieces of internal evidence came to light, all showing plainly that Alfred Trescott, and he only, had been Clement's anonymous maligner. At first Clement had been utterly unable to conceive any sufficient motive for so persistent and bitter a hatred; but old Jerry Shaw, piecing together what he had observed for himself of Alfred's pursuit of Mabel, and what he had gathered from Corda's artless talk about Mr. Charlewood's attachment to her dear "Miss Bell," had arrived at a pretty accurate conclusion on the subject, which conclusion he communicated to Jack, who in turn communicated it to Clement.

"The ruffian was jealous of you, it seems," said Jack. "He had the outrageous audacity to aspire to my cousin Mabel, and hated you, as I suppose he would have hated any one who was in a position to have the chance of being on an intimate footing in Mrs. Saxelby's house."

"Then your cousin never—" Clement stopped abruptly.

"Never thought of *him*? Good God, Charlewood, is it possible that you, who have known Mabel so well and so long, can ask such a question?"

Jack spoke with indignant warmth, but Clement was so far from being offended by it, that he shook him heartily by the hand, and said, humbly, that he begged pardon, that the idea *was* monstrous, and that he ought to have known better.

It has been stated that, at Mabel's intercession, no steps were taken which could make Corda aware of the discovery that had been made. But Jack insisted upon enlightening Lady Popham as to the true character of her protégé without delay, and volunteered to accompany Clement on the visit which was to be made for that purpose.

They had a terrible time of it with my lady. For nearly an hour she persisted in disbelieving all their statements, called them vile calumniators and treacherous scandal-mongers, abused them in very choice Italian, and flounced up and down her drawing-room in a whirlwind of wrath. Then suddenly, and quite without any preparation, she veered round to a firm and

rooted conviction of Alfred's baseness, and wept gingerly behind her point-lace-bordered handkerchief, and bemoaned herself, and reproached him, and told the two bewildered young men that, from childhood upwards, she had been an impulsive, sensitive creature, liable to be the victim of strong emotion, and totally deficient in British stolidity and self-repression. But there was, under all the froth of her demonstrative affections, a substratum of feeling in the kindly old woman, which feeling had been deeply wounded by the disclosure of Alfred's utter worthlessness. It was not merely the mortification of finding that she had been utterly fooled and deceived from the beginning—though that mortification was keen to a person who, like Lady Popham, prided herself on the acuteness of her judgment—but there was real regret for her protégé's unworthy conduct, and real compassion for the innocent little girl in whom Jack and Clement earnestly tried to interest her. "Poverina, poverina!" cried my lady, wiping her eyes. "C'est touchant. C'est vraiment touchant. The innocent little fool. But that Alfred—viper! However, my dear people, we must hush it up. No esclandre. For Heaven's sake, no esclandre! You English people always put everything in the newspapers. Now, if this story is put in the newspapers, I shall, tout simplement, expire!"

She was assured that there was no intention of putting the story into the newspapers; and then, after a minute or two's reflection, she undertook to get rid of her latest and most unfortunate speculation in *genoues*, by the simple process of running away from him! "I shall go to Vienna," said my lady—"I shall go to Vienna, and leave a—a—note for that scelerato—how handsome he is! Quel dommage! And meanwhile, until I can start, I shall take to my bed, and tell my people not to let him pass. A few lines, you know, and—a—cheque, I think. Oh, of course it's wrong, I know; highly immoral. Don't preach to me, I implore. It never was of the least use to preach to me. But the fact is, I was the means of dragging this *birbante* out of his obscurity, and giving him hopes and tastes and aspirations that—Ah, Dio buono! Yes, yes, there must be a cheque, and meanwhile I shall go to bed."

Not the least gratified person at the return of Walter Charlewood, and the clearing away of the cloud which had hung over Clement, was Mr. McCulloch; and before Jack left London to return home, his friend and patron resolved to give a farewell dinner ostensibly in his honour, to which he invited Clement and Penelope Charlewood. "I wonder," the old Scotchman had said to Jack, "I wonder whether your cousin and Mrs. Saxelby would honour me with their presence! I have had the pleasure of calling on them with you, but I don't like to seem intrusive. Public people, celebrities like Miss Bell, get worried a good deal in that way, I dare say."

Jack, after a word or two with his cousin,

had undertaken to say that she would be very happy to accept Mr. McCulloch's proffered hospitality; and thus it came to pass that the invitations to dinner at the Hawthorns included Mabel and her mother.

CHAPTER IX. IS IT TOO LATE?

MR. McCULLOCH'S dinner-party consisted of Clement and Penelope Charlewood, Mrs. Saxelby, Mabel, and Jack, and a wealthy picture-dealer, whose acquaintance Mr. McCulloch had thought might be useful to the young painter. The presence of this stranger prevented any allusion to the recent events which had so nearly concerned all the rest of the party, and directed the conversation to general topics. The host exerted himself successfully to make the evening pass pleasantly, and Penelope Charlewood quite captivated the old Scotchman by her keen sharp wit and shrewd sayings. It was long since there had been so bright a light in poor Penny's eye, or so genial a smile on her lips. And the trouble she had passed through just served to soften her biting humour, and to give a touch of gentleness to her manner. Mrs. Saxelby, in the place of honour at Mr. McCulloch's right hand, was all suavity, and Jack was in his usual state of high spirits and unclouded good humour. Mabel and Clement were the most silent of the party. They had met but once since their interview at the little house in Barnsbury, and then their meeting had taken place in the midst of the excitement consequent on Jack's discovery of Walter. Both were silent, but in Mabel's face there shone the reflexion of an inward happiness, while Clement was grave and preoccupied. He reproached himself for the words he had been hurried into saying. His feeling might have been rendered by the old lines,

I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more.

And, in his judgment, honour required him to refrain from a suit which could result only in a humiliating repulse, or—he scarcely admitted the alternative—in tying Mabel to his fallen fortunes. But yet as he sat near to her, listening to her rare sweet words, watching the quiet modest grace of her movements, and the pure light that shone in her clear eyes, he felt that she was so dear to him, that all life without her looked blank and grey. Nevertheless, he "loved honour more," and made up his mind to endure his sorrow manfully.

The preceding evening had been the last of the season at the Royal Thespian Theatre; consequently the popular actress was free to enjoy the sweet breath of Mr. McCulloch's flowers, and to sit in his pretty garden in the August twilight, instead of hurrying away to her professional duties. The host had had a table brought on to the lawn after dinner, and sat sipping his wine in the pleasant air, with much gusto.

"It's a better smell than the gas-lamps—eh,

Miss Bell?" said he, observing Mabel with a bunch of carnations in her hand.

"I dare say Miss Bell likes the gas, too," said the picture-dealer, "or, at all events, the incense that mounts to her nostrils with the flare of the float. The breath of public applause is very sweet."

"I think," said Mabel, with her shy smile, "that the flowers are better."

"Come, Mabel," cried Penelope, "be honest; I used to cite you as one of the few truth-telling people I knew. Tell the truth, now, you *do* love the incense of praise and applause. We all love it. It's only the folks who can't get any that are allowed to pretend to despise it, and that is not your case, at all events. You *do* think the incense a sweet thing."

"Yes," answered Mabel, slowly; and then, after a minute's pause, she laid one hand on Penelope's shoulder, and gently touching her lips with the rich fragrant carnation that she held in the other, added, in a low voice, "but, still I think the flowers are better."

"One can't live upon perfume, though, Mabel," said Jack, laughingly, "any more than one can live upon—upon love or moonshine, both very charming things in their way! Whereas the public approval translates itself into very tangible coin of the realm."

"Jack talking worldliness and common sense is a delicious spectacle," cried Mabel, "when I know so well that he would not allow all the bright gold that ever was minted to weigh against the lightest wish of any one he really loved!" Looking up, she caught Clement's eyes fixed upon her, and dropped her own with a bright flush.

"Mrs. Saxelby," said Mr. McCulloch, "before it gets too dark to see it, will you walk round my little place? I have some rather choice shrubs down yonder, and ferns—I don't know whether you care about ferns——"

"I do!" said Penelope; "may I come too?"

"Of course, my dear Miss Charlewood. Allow me. There. Now, Charlewood, if you will give Miss Bell your arm. You two fellows are going to have cigars, I see." And Mr. McCulloch walked away with Mrs. Saxelby and Penelope, leaving Clement and Mabel to follow. Jack and the picture-dealer remained to smoke under the verandah.

Clement stood for a moment by Mabel's side.

"Will you come?" he said, hesitatingly.

She touched his offered arm lightly with her hand, and they walked on together. For some paces they proceeded in silence; then Mabel spoke:

"I am so, so glad that your trouble about Walter is all at an end."

"Thank you. I hope, if we can get him abroad, he may do well yet."

"And I am so very glad, too, that—that—the calumnies against you have been traced to their source. When Jack told me of the letters, I was so indignant—so grieved!"

"You are very good."

There was another pause. The hand on his arm trembled as Mabel said, at length,

"Have you not forgiven me, Clement?"

It was the first time she had ever called him by that name, and the sound of it, uttered by her voice, thrilled him to the heart. He would have given the world to take her in his arms and fold her in the shelter of his great love. He would have given the world, but not what he prized above all—his self-respect. No; he loved her so much, she was so dear to him, *because* he "loved honour more." He answered, steadily:

"I told you, Mabel, that I had nothing to forgive you. What pain you once caused me is past and over, and was given unwillingly."

"God knows it was given *unwillingly*. But——"

"Let me say one word; it shall be the last with which I will trouble you about my own private feelings. The other day, when you came to our house on an errand of kindness and friendship, I was hurried into saying words that should not have been spoken. I had been harassed out of all self-command, and the unexpected sight of you opened an old wound."

"You said what you did not mean, then?" she murmured, half withdrawing her hand from its resting-place on his arm.

"No, Mabel. Even to spare you pain, I cannot tell you a lie. I meant then what I mean now, and what I shall mean all my life long. But, nevertheless, I should not have uttered such words to you. To what end should I have uttered them? Forget them, Mabel, and be my friend again, as you were in the old days, if you can."

"But I cannot."

"I am grieved to hear it, but it must be borne like the rest."

"Do you know why I cannot be your friend again, as in the old days? Clement, Clement, you called me proud. I believe I am so by nature. My pride once hurt you, and, perhaps, blinded me to my own feelings. I do not know. I was very young. I had never thought of—of—your seeking me in that way, and I had received a warning which cut my girlish spirit to the quick, that I must not aspire to the honour you might be led to offer me. But, Clement—dear Clement,—I lay down before you my old pride—I throw it at your feet. Those words, that you bid me to forget, filled me with joy and gratitude. I have been learning all this time—learning by absence—by the jealous pang at my heart when I thought you cared for another—by the yearning to help and comfort you in your great trouble—I have been learning that I love you, Clement—that I love you very dearly."

For one moment, in the ecstasy of hearing her speak those words, he caught her to his breast and kissed her. But almost directly he released her from his clasp, and stepped apart from her.

"Noblest, dearest Mabel," he said, "I have no right to take advantage of your generous

goodness. What should I be—think, what should I be—if I could avail myself of your sweet compassion to bind you—you with your brilliant prospects—to a man so poor, so burdened, as I am?"

Mabel had hidden her face in her hands. She raised it slowly now, and it looked pale and white in the gathering dusk.

"You would show yourself to be strong and good," she answered with a quivering voice. "You would prove that you know how small and poor all worldly considerations are in the presence of a true love."

"All mere worldly considerations, Mabel. But there are others which—Ah, think what it must be for me to plead thus against myself!" He broke off abruptly, and pressed his hands to his head.

"And think," she answered, "what it must be for me to plead *for* myself! But, Clement, be sure—nay, I believe you *are* sure—that if I had not thought you spoke the full and simple truth when you told me that you loved me still, there is no power on earth which could have made me speak the words I have spoken!" The old haughty curve on the delicate mouth, the old proud drooping of the eyes! He might have measured the depth of her love for him by the struggle that her pride was making to subdue all manifestation of tenderness. But in an instant she went on impulsively, "What is money, or what money can bring, between you and me? You would have bestowed your great wealth upon me, a poor penniless girl, because you loved me. Did the sacrifice appear very great?"

"You know, Mabel, that there would have been no sacrifice. If I could have been made ruler of the world, my highest pride would have been to call you my wife."

"And yet you cannot credit me with feeling in that way! You talk of my brilliant prospects! In another year I shall, if my health is spared, have earned money enough to achieve one great purpose of my life, a provision for Dooley's education, and a sum sufficient (with what she has already) to provide a comfortable subsistence for my mother. Those are my 'brilliant prospects.' I do not despise them. I am glad and grateful to have succeeded so far. But when once that is done, what are the 'brilliant prospects' before me? And you? Shall you be happy? Ah, a man's love is not as a woman's! He can *bestow* royally, but he cannot be generous enough to *accept*!" Tears were falling down her cheeks as she spoke, and she turned away to hide them.

"Mabel! Mabel!" shouted a voice at a little distance, and in a moment Jack came running towards them. He was breathless and agitated. "Mabel," he cried, "they are looking for you. Jerry Shaw is here. He went first to Desmond Lodge, and not finding you, came on here. He is come on a sad errand. Poor little Corda Trescott, they think, is dying, and she has been begging to see you and Mr. Charlewood. Will you go to her?"

Mabel flew along the garden path to the lawn, where a little group of persons was standing. Jerry Shaw was in the midst, leaning on his stick, and with a face full of woe. Lingo was not with him. When he saw Mabel and Clement, he advanced towards them hurriedly. "She's going, the darling," he said. "The sweet loving little angel is ready to take flight from among us. Will you come to her, Miss Bell? It's for the last time. She'll never trouble you nor anybody else any more." Old Jerry wiped his eyes on his checked handkerchief. "He wouldn't leave her a minute," he went on; "there he lies stretched by her bedside, and it's hard to get him away, even to take his food."

"Her father?" asked Mrs. Saxelby.

"No, ma'am. My dog Lingo. Her father's a poor demented kind of creature. He does nothing but moan and bother her. She went to sleep this afternoon, and woke up about an hour ago, and says she, 'Mr. Shaw, I know I shall not be here very long, and I'd be very thankful if I could see my dear Miss Mabel before I go away, and Mr. Charlewood too. I want to speak to him. Would you ask them to come to me?' And when I promised that I would set off to find the two of ye that minute, she just gave a smile that seemed to light up the room, so bright it was, and laid down again as quiet as a lamb. I have a cab waiting here at the gate, Miss Bell."

Mabel and Clement followed the old man to the vehicle, and in a few minutes they were driving at a rapid pace towards Blackfriars.

CHAPTER X. CALM.

As they went along through the rattling streets, old Jerry related to them at intervals, and in a broken manner, how Corda had been found insensible on the floor three days ago; how they had thought her dead at first, for that her mouth and clothes were stained with blood; how, when she had come to herself again, she had merely declared that she had hurt herself in falling over a footstool; and how she had been in bed ever since, and growing rapidly weaker. "I knew in my heart," said Jerry, "that she wasn't very long for this world, but I little thought it would be so soon. In these three days her strength has been going, going, like snow-flakes melting in the sun. And I believe, on my soul, that that brother of hers has been murdering her."

"You don't suppose," cried Clement, hastily, "that he used any violence to the child?"

"I don't suppose he took a cudgel and knocked her brains out," said Jerry, nodding his head portentously, "but I do suppose that there are more ways of killing than one. She couldn't bear unkindness from those she loved, any more than a little tender blossom can bear a north-east wind. And she had the purest, most sensitive conscience in the world. She suffered for all her brother's sins that she knew of, more than a good many tough people—who

call themselves pious, too—suffer for their own!”

Mabel noticed with a heavy heart that Jerry spoke of little Corda in the past, and as if she were already gone from them. “Is there no hope for her?” she asked, tearfully. “Have they good advice? Has anything been left undone? So young a creature! Are they sure they cannot save her?”

“My dear young lady,” said Jerry, solemnly, “when you see the little angel face of her, you will know, as I know, that her life is ebbing away fast. And when you see, too, how peaceful and tranquil she is, and think of what her life has been, and was like to be in future, I think you won’t desire to keep her here.”

“Is—is the brother in the house now?” asked Mabel, as they approached their destination.

“He is in the house, but not in her room. He sits like a log in his own chamber, next to hers, neither moving nor speaking. When she asks for him, he goes in to her bedside and holds her hand, and lets her kiss him and talk to him, but he gets away again directly she will let him go, as if the sight of her were dreadful to him. And well it may be. The old father, up to yesterday, refused to believe in any danger at all. Now I think he sees it, and he is like a demented creature.”

“It is a blessing for the child that you are near her, Mr. Shaw,” said Mabel.

“Indeed, then, I’m afraid it’s the first time in my life that I have been a blessing to any one! But she is very fond of me, the dear little bird; and as to Lingo! Ah, Miss Bell, you know something of him, but what he has been in these days is more than ye could credit.”

They reached the house, and entered softly. The cross-grained servant, a good deal subdued in manner, was on the watch for them. “Come up-stairs by yourself first, Miss Bell, dear,” said Jerry. “It’s a melancholy scene for ye, but you wouldn’t have had me disregard the last wishes of the poor darling. I know you’ve always been good to her, and she loves you with all her heart.”

Mabel followed the old man up-stairs, and entered the bedroom. Corda lay passive in the little white bed, and at the first sight of her face, Mabel could not restrain her tears. And yet there was no expression of suffering on it. It was peaceful and serene, with a strange far-away look in the lustrous eyes. Her bright hair lay all curling and waving in rich masses on the pillow, and Mabel could not help observing the singular contrast between the rich strong life there seemed to be in those chestnut tresses, and the evident fading of the pale little countenance beneath them. When the child saw her, she smiled, and feebly held out her arms. “Don’t cry, dear Miss Mabel,” she whispered. “I am not sorry now. I think it is best. I think it may do some good to—to others if I die.”

She lay still again for a minute or two, holding Mabel’s hand pressed to her cheek. “My little Corda—dear little Corda, is there anything in the world that I can do for you? Anything that you wish?”

“I wished to see you, and you are here. It seems to me that every one is very good to me. See, papa,” she said, weakly, trying to move the curtain on the other side of the bed, “see, dear papa, here is Miss Mabel. Look how happy I am. Do look, papa, it will make you more unsorry.”

Mr. Trescott bowed down his head on the side of the bed, and moaned, “Oh, Corda, Corda, don’t leave me, Corda. Don’t go away from me, my little one, my little one.”

A look of trouble flitted across the child’s face. “It won’t be for long, dear papa,” she said. “You will see me again. And I am going to mamma. I am glad mamma is there. She will know me, though I may not know her at first. I am so glad,” she repeated in a whisper, “that mamma is there!”

There was silence again, only broken by Mr. Trescott’s sobs. Presently Corda drew down Mabel’s head, and put her lips to her ear. “Is he here with you?”

“Mr. Charlewood? Yes, darling.”

“How good of him to come! He was always good to Corda. Papa, dear, I am going to ask one thing of you, perhaps the last thing I shall ever ask. You won’t refuse me, dear?” He could not speak, but made a sign with his head. The child went on: “I want to say a word to Mr. Charlewood and Miss Mabel all by themselves. It won’t take a minute, papa. Will you wait outside while I say it?”

Her father rose slowly and left the room, staggering as he went like a drunken man. Jerry Shaw went down to call Clement, and Mabel remained alone with Corda. “See,” said the latter, pointing downward to where Lingo was lying perfectly motionless, with his head between his paws, “he has stayed so all day. Poor Lingo!” At her voice the dog raised his head and looked at her with his wistful eyes. Corda stretched down her hand to him, and he licked it gently; but the little effort of the movement seemed to have exhausted her strength, and she fell back on the pillow with closed eyes. Mabel silently bathed her forehead with some eau-de-Cologne, and presently, when she heard Clement’s footsteps on the stairs, the child opened her eyes, which looked larger and more lustrous than ever. “Tell him to come in, please,” she said to Mabel. Her own voice was growing too weak to be heard at any distance from the bed.

Clement entered and placed himself near Mabel, by Corda’s pillow. A smile that was almost joyous in its brightness came into Corda’s face as she looked at them both.

“Do you remember, Mr. Charlewood,” she said, putting her wasted hand into his, “how you used to come and see me in New Bridge-street, when my bone was broken? You were so kind to me!”

"Poor Corda! You were very kind to me, to forgive me for running over you."

"Oh no, no! I was glad afterwards, because if you had not run over me, I should never have known you or her." She moved her face towards Mabel as she spoke, and the latter bent down and kissed her.

"Now I must try to say what I want to say to you, because poor papa is staying away on purpose. Dear Miss Mabel, would you give me some of that stuff on the table?"

Mabel poured a draught of some medicine from a phial that the child pointed to, and gave it to her. Then she raised the pillows so as to support her in a sitting posture, and sat down by the bedside, holding Corda's hand in hers.

"Mr. Charlewood," the child began, "I found out the other day that you know about—about—some letters that were written, and that made me so very dreadfully sorry and unhappy, that I could not rest until I had tried to do something to prevent their hurting you."

"Dear little Corda, they had done and could do me no harm. Do not let us speak of that, my child."

"Oh, Mr. Charlewood, I must speak of it. It is about that that I so wished to speak. If you had not found out—I do not rightly know how you found it out, but I guess that it was through me—if you had not found out who wrote those letters, I do not think that I should ever have told you. I dare say I was very silly, but I had the hope in my mind that I could make that gentleman, Mr. —"

"McCulloch?"

"Yes; Mr. McCulloch know that you were very good, without betraying—anybody."

"Poor little one!"

"Yes; of course it was very silly. But I did not know what to do. And now it has all come out. But what I wanted to say was this: Mr. Charlewood, can people be punished—put in prison—for writing letters like those?"

"Corda, if any such fear is weighing on your mind, be at peace. For your sake, little Corda, those letters shall be put away, and forgotten, as though they had never been. And, further, you may believe, for I tell it you in all truth and seriousness, that they have done no real evil to me or to any one, except to the writer."

"Ah, yes, to him! Thank you, Mr. Charlewood. And now I want just to say one word more. Miss Mabel knows—don't you, dear?—how I love Alf. He has done wrong, I know, and I know you have reason to be very angry with him; but if you would try—oh, if you would try, for my sake, to—forgive him, it would make me so happy! You can't quite understand, perhaps, but Miss Mabel can, because she knows how she should feel if it were little Dooley, who was a grown man, and had gone wrong, like my brother, how dearly I love Alf. You know, Mr. Charlewood, my mamma died soon after I was born, and Alf was only quite a little boy, and poor papa was so sorry when mamma died, that perhaps he did not take so much care of Alf, nor seem so fond of him,

as he might have done if mamma had lived. Alf used to be very good to me when I was a little tiny weakly child. I remember when he would carry me up and down stairs in his arms, because I was so small and weak; and got tired so easily."

Mabel bent down over the sweet pleading face, and kissed it. Her tears fell warm on Corda's chestnut curls as she did so.

"And, do you know," continued the child, gazing up at Clement with earnest eyes, "do you know, that when Alf was so successful, and that rich lady made so much of him, and offered to bring him to London, he said, all the time, that he would take care of me, and that if he grew rich I should grow rich too. And it is only two or three days ago that he was planning to take me abroad with him to make me well and strong."

"I hope he loves you, Corda. He would be worse than I have words to say, if he did not."

"Oh, but he does; he does, indeed!" cried Corda, eagerly; "and I wanted so much to tell you so, for fear you should think that he had been unkind to me. He is cross sometimes, because his temper is passionate. But, now that I am ill, you don't know how sorry he is. He sits in the next room all day long, without going out, that he may be near me when I want to see him. And they say he looks so melancholy, and scarcely speaks a word. If ever he did anything to vex me, I know he is very, very sorry for it now. And when I am gone away he will be more sorry still. But, though it grieves me sometimes to think of that, I like to know that he is sorry, because, perhaps, it may help to—make him good."

Two large tears, the first they had seen her shed, rolled down Corda's cheeks as she spoke, and she put up her hand to cover her eyes, and lay silent for some minutes. By-and-by she looked up again, this time at Mabel, and said:

"Dear Miss Mabel, you were always so kind to Corda, and I loved you from the first day I saw you, that I think you will be good to poor papa, if you can, for my sake. He may be glad to talk to somebody about his little girl, to somebody who loved her as you did—"

"As I do, Corda," broke in Mabel, weeping, "as I do love you, my sweet good darling!"

"Yes, dear. But it will soon be over. And then papa will be very lonely; and if you would let him come, and see you sometimes, and talk of the old times, it would be very good of you."

"I promise, dear child, I promise, faithfully, to fulfil your wishes. But, Corda dear, perhaps you may yet get better. You are so young, there should be so many years of life before you."

The child shook her head gently. She smiled, and the same far-away gaze came into her eyes that they had seen there before.

"No, no; I am going to mamma. I am not sorry—only a little sorry for *them*—and I shall be so happy with mamma."

Then, turning her eyes on Clement, she said, softly:

"Give me your hand, please, Mr. Charlewood."

He gave it, and she took Mabel's also, and joined the two together in her feeble clasp.

"My two good friends," she whispered, "my two kind ones. Some day, when you are married to each other——" She broke off, feeling Clement start, and looked up. "You will be married to each other, some day, won't you? I always used to like to think of that, long ago. Some day, when you are very glad and happy together, you will think of little Corda, and it will be sweet for you to know that you were good to her, and that she was very, very grateful."

The two hands she held met in a long clinging pressure. Strange that the two beings, whom the brother had striven so hard to sunder, should be joined in one clasp by the sister's innocent childish hand!

"Yes," said Corda, smiling faintly, "you will be very happy. Nothing is so happy as really *loving*, I think. And you do love each other."

Mabel was kneeling, with her cheek on the pillow beside the little head covered with bright burnished waving tresses. There was silence, only broken by the low sobs which Mabel could not altogether repress. Corda closed her eyes, again, and remained so motionless, that, for a moment, they thought she had fainted, but presently she opened them wide and looked around her. There was a change coming over her face, a change that heralded the end, as both the watchers felt too surely.

"Papa," said Corda, in so low a voice, that Mabel, whose ear was at her lips, could scarcely hear it. "Call papa and Alf."

Mabel signed to Clement, who left the room, and presently returned with Jerry Shaw and the child's father. The latter flung himself on his knees, by the bed, opposite to Mabel. He seized one of the dying child's hands, and pressed it to his breast, as though, by holding it fast, he could keep her with him. Corda's glance wandered uneasily round the room.

"Your brother?" said Jerry Shaw. "Yes, mavourneen. He is coming."

As he spoke, the dog uttered a low growl, instantly suppressed, and Alfred Trescott entered the room. The child's face lighted up at the sight of him, even at that moment, and she made a sign with her eyes that he should approach her. It would be hard to conceive a countenance so haggard, worn, and terrible in its evil beauty as Alfred's, standing there, with his dark eyes fixed on his little sister, and seeming neither to heed nor see any of the other occupants of the chamber. All the history of his wasted and perverted youth was written on his face. He came slowly towards

the bed, and suffered the child to take his hand and kiss it.

"Good-bye, darling Alf," she said. "Be good, Alf. Be good, dear, and you will be happy when I am gone."

"Corda!" the voice that came from his lips started all present. It did not seem to belong to him. It was hollow, and hoarse, and broken. "Corda, you are not going!"

"Yes, dear, to mamma. Love me, Alf, and—and—be good to poor papa."

"No, no, Corda. No, you must not die. You shall not die. Stay, Corda! Little Corda, the only creature on this earth who cares for me, stay awhile, Corda. I *cannot* let you go; I must have time to be better to you. Live, Corda, only live, and you will see; I will be good to you—I will—I will."

His face was convulsed, but there was no tear in his eyes, and he stood with his hand on hers, looking down upon her with the despairing gaze of a drowning man who sees the lost plank to which he clung shattered and lost.

Mabel passed her arm round the child, supporting her, and gently wiped her forehead with a handkerchief. "Don't cry," said Corda. "Don't be sorry, all of you. I think—I—hear mamma. It seems as if—as if—there were a voice calling me, ever so far away. It must be—mamma. Good-bye, papa. Kiss me, Alf, my own brother—my darling—be—good—God bless you, Alf. How dark it is! That is Mabel's hand, I know. God bless you, dear." Suddenly she sat upright, as though struggling for breath; but in a moment the most lovely smile beamed over her sweet face, she stretched her arms out before her, crying, "Yes, yes, it *is* mamma! She is calling me again. Oh, mamma, mamma, take Corda!" And fell back in Mabel's arms as softly as a little wave that melts upon the summer sea—dead.

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THE DEAR GIRL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BELLA DONNA," "NEVER FORGOTTEN," &c.

CHAPTER VI. MR. BLACKER'S WALK.

THEY had bright mornings at the Dieppe colony, and bright as one of these we can see the "trustee of the English chapel," Mr. Blacker, striding, smiling thoughtfully to the painful stones, as if he were saying, "Very good, now—uncommon good, that of Sir Thomas." He had his head in the air, looking from side to side with importance and challenge. He was busy. Indeed, he was always busy. "They put dreadful work on me for the little ee-moluments of the place." Still, he would not have given it up for the world, and he delighted in saluting, not with obsequiousness but with a prompt confidence, the new arrivals in his old formula: "I am Mr. Blacker, the oldest resident here. I made it a point to come and call." The little maid of the lodgings would come tripping up with the news of M. Blackaire, the unmelodious sound of creaking would follow, and his long person, half stooped, would come upon the strangers. This was the operation of "finding out about these people." He examined them on their connexions, friends, and circumstances. If these are satisfactory; "Oh, my dear madam, we must get you along here. They will be very glad to see you in society. They are difficile, as the people here call it, and it requires nicety. But leave it to me, and I am sure it can be done." The strangers—young ladies, perhaps—are in fluttering delight, having come to a place where they did not "know a soul," and now see a whole vision of social delights opening.

"Oh, sir, how kind of you."

"Not at all, my dear lady. We must help one another down here, smooth the pillow, and sweeten the path. We'll begin by degrees; get half a dozen of the regular stagers—our best, you know—to call. I'll manage that. Once they take you up, it's all right."

This was in the case of "most desirable addition to society." But there were others who came for vulgar economies, and Mr. Blacker, looking round the rather mean apartment with a little alarm and unpleasantness, would stay only a short while, and be dispiriting in his

conversation. It was very hard, next to impossible, to get into Dieppe society. "You see, my good lady, questions are asked, and difficulties are made, and Mrs. Dalrymple says she won't call upon any stranger *too* soon; but you'll do very fairly, by-and-by, you know." Then going home, he tells Mrs. Blacker they are "poor sort of creatures."

We see him on this bright morning posting along with a complimentary smile, looking to the right and left, sometimes speaking to himself. He was walking very fast, for he had great business on hand. The small streets through which he passed glittered like the little spar boxes they sold in the shops, and these tiny shops with the gay toys they displayed in abundance, with the scanty show of useful necessaries, such as a stray silk or two in a mercer's window, and the half-dozen hats which seemed the latter's whole stock in trade, looked all on the smallest conceivable scale. Mr. Blacker, old resident as he was, had the deepest contempt for the place. "My dear sir, take the poorest English country town we have, it would buy and sell these creatures ten times over. Take one of our butchers' shops, with our noble beef flabbing about in enormous masses—well, I go into Schneider's there, corner of Roo Royle, and I see a couple of fellows cutting and picking and slicing at a few little wedges of meat." He had now got to a shop in "Great-street"—no word was hurtled so much through the air as "the Grawn-roo"—over a milliner's, nice and clean looking. But in the colony, as with the mind, it was only the interior merits that were regarded. We came to a dirty stable, with a butcher's shambles at one side, and passed through a dark smelling door, and so went up-stairs to see my Lady Colley.

Mr. Blacker passed through the milliner's shop with a lofty manner, saying, "Up-stairs—Ong ho?" He was going to see Mrs. Dalrymple and her daughters—a widow lady of good family, who, though she found it convenient to reside at the colony, was not reduced, had the art of making herself respected; and if she saved at all, it was with the view of keeping up her station, by giving little entertainments. She gave a tone to the place. Mr. Blacker, who was good natured where greater people did not interfere, and where there were no fashionable sick calls, as his visits might be styled, had a sort

of liking and respect for these ladies. He was fond of dining, or coming of an evening to have a rubber, and still fonder of a glass of good English sherry, which that lady used to have. The daughters, three in number, were nice, pleasant, and good.

"How are you to-day, ma'am?" he said, wiping his forehead. "Just come in on my rounds, you see."

"Tell us *all* the news, Mr. Blacker," said the youngest.

"See here," said Mr. Blacker, confidentially, but not answering, and coming close to the widow lady, "I want you to do something. I have just been with the Guernsey Beauforts, the nicest, most charming people I *ever* met. They came by the boat. He was a colonel in the army, a tall, haan'some jain-tle-man'y man." Mr. Blacker, in fits of deep admiration, used to dwell on his words thus: "She is a real lady, and sweet daughters. One is Victoria, called after our future queen."

"But now, Mr. Blacker," says Mrs. Dalrymple, gravely, "how do you know about them?"

"Oh, there are signs, marks, and tokens. As to manner and an air, there's no mistaking. They're at Pouillac's, ma'am. I took them there myself. Seventy-five francs a week the rascal asked them, though I winked at him. Ma'am, he saw what they were as well as I did. 'But,' says Mr. Beaufort, laying down the first fortnight in advance, 'they told me, Mr. Blacker,' says he, 'that this Dieppe was such an extravagant place.'"

"I suppose," said the widow, "you would like us to call on them?"

"Now see," he added, with fresh confidence, "I am just going round to a few at first. Do the thing quietly and gently. It wouldn't do at all to open the flood-gates, and let in the whole canaille on them. Oh, I assure you they are aile-egant people; quiet to a degree; and speak, you know, in the old, quiet, assured way; not like the creatures that brag, and swagger, and have nothing, you know. I am going back at two o'clock," said Mr. Blacker, rising, "for lunch, and then to take him and her round to the shops to order things. If you only heard the nice modest way they asked me; for Pouillac's would never do, they say. They want furniture of their own. And I—er—told of you, and—er—she said you were the sort of people they would so like to know. And see here, I'll tell you what you'll do, young ladies."

"What, Mr. Blacker? Tell us, do."

"Get mamma to give us a rubber some night—a quiet, nice thing; will talk over the people; and, ma'am, I'll manage the Beauforts. They said they won't go out for a long time, but, I dare say—in fact, I'll go security that you can have them."

"But," said Mrs. Dalrymple, at last called up into something like excitement, "we could only have a little cards, and, perhaps, a song and lemonade—"

Mr. Blacker smiled, and waved her off.

"Now, now, see that. The ve-ry thing which they like. All in good time. I tell you what, I'll just drop in myself to-night for a snug game, and report progress." And Mr. Blacker went his way, leaving the sober but cheerful ladies in not a little excitement.

He goes off on other missionary duty. This busy gentleman firmly believed that these were duties of a sacred calling; and, in carrying them out, he was overworked, underpaid, "badly treated." He might be pardoned for this curious delusion; for, to say the truth, beyond the Sunday's more showy routine, the Dieppe congregation were not notorious for piety.

As we go his way, and with him look up to this window and that, we might wish for some convenient Asmodeus who would open the front on a hinge, baby-house fashion, and have a glimpse of the queer people, the queer crooked sticks, that have been flung across the Straits, and the queerer shifts going on there.

Here, in this narrow house, like a thin wiry man, lives DOCTOR MACAN—one of the English doctors, but from Ireland—with a wife who brings from Erin the almost too genial fertility of that land; for the doctor was struggling, as he himself once remarked pathetically, against no less than eight children. The last child came about two years ago; but, as he added, "there was no knowing the moment when Mrs. Macan might take it into her head to begin again." That was a sufficient grievance; but a worse one was WHITE, the new English doctor, who had lately come to settle—a single man, of easy address and pleasant manners. "Really a most amusing creature," some ladies said. He could be gallant, too, and there were some of the younger girls not displeased to be rallied on the single doctor's attentions. In a dearth of beaux, many inferior articles rise in value, just as political economists tell us the price of second-class land governs the amount of rent. In that little hotbed of scandal and malignant whispering, the new doctor did not asperse his rival. He would merely say Doctor Macan was very good and very sound in his way; but, naturally, newer things had come out since Doctor Macan had been at home, and he could not be expected to be up to the present state of science. I am sorry to say that Doctor Macan did not reciprocate this handsome tone on the part of his rival—enemy, rather, as he considered; his language was not as regulated as it should have been.

"An infernal stuck-up scheming puppy, with as much knowledge of physic as was in his—Doctor Macan's—little finger. A mere charlatan, sir, with his soft-sawder manner. Wait. We'll hear of something one of these fine mornings." But the only thing we did hear was that Doctor White was every day doing better and better. "Eating into my practice," said Doctor Macan; and, alas! eating into the clothes and meat of Fanny, and Jacky, and Paddy, and a little girl called "Dulia." Worst of all, it did seem as though Mrs. Macan were really making up her mind

to begin again. Poor Doctor Macan! Of course Mr. Blacker went with the new doctor. Had not Lady McCallum sent for him in the vapours, and spoken of him languidly as very painstaking and clever? "Poor Macan!" Mr. Blacker would say, "he was very well in his day; but the man is literally overrun with children"—as if *this* were a glaring deficiency in medical knowledge. As nothing succeeds like success, so nothing fails like failure; and people began to fancy, from his practice falling off, that there was a decay also in his skill.

Going along with the clergyman, we can see him look up at another window; and we know that there lives "M. Pequinet," the French doctor—"a poor sort of three-franc fellow," who, indeed, Mr. Blacker gives out, will take anything that you have handy—a crust of bread, half a bottle of wine. This slander, when repeated to both the English doctors, was all but encouraged, and Doctor Macan said "he wouldn't put it past him." They wouldn't "meet him in consultation;" and just as the English clergyman contrived to make dissenters of the mere local clergy, so the foreign doctors quite degraded the native faculty into poor intruders and charlatans. Wonderful English! and, best of all gifts, their admirable self-confidence and belief that *they* are the best men everywhere. It is worth gold, silver, and precious stones, because it brings them all these.

More Asmodean peeps—the Place with the good apartments, where the Wests lived, and at whom the clergyman mentally pulled a face. Gilbert West never paid homage to Mr. Blacker, could not conceal a certain impatience in his presence, and in his absence spoke of him with freedom. "This sort degrades us before foreign nations." With much more to the same effect.

Now, at the corner, Mr. Blacker sees coming out of a house a clergyman of another denomination—a tall figure, dressed pretty much like himself, only with a swarthy Spanish tint in the face, and glossy black hair curling up at the back of his neck.

"Good evening, Mussier Pigou," he said to him as he would to a rather "slow" dissenting clergyman at home. (This was the invariable genteel English pronunciation of that day, not the vulgar *moussier*. The foreigners accepted it with grave respect, and were regularly "mussiered.") "Evening, Pigou," repeated he, with a curt wave of his arm. "Where do *you* come from now?"

M. Pigou knew English tolerably (he was a Strasburgan, not a pure Frenchman); but, indeed, most of the French there were obliged to apply themselves to our tongue.

M. Pigou was the pasteur of the place, a handsome man, with no congregation to speak of. Mr. Blacker always addressed him with respect. There was a history about him, but here, every one had a queer history. The only difference was in the degree of queerness. "Mussier Piggoo," so handsome, so Velasquez-looking, so sad, so misunderstood, so dreamy at times, and

so agreeable and vivacious when he chose, was living apart from his wife, with whom, alas! he found it impossible to be vivacious, or dreamy, or sentimental, or even handsome. It was understood that she was a poor, sensible, matter-of-fact creature, without a faculty beyond clothes and dinner, and looking after their three children who lived with her now at Rouen. The pastor often was induced to tell his sad story to the young ladies, and excited the deepest interest. He had always a little tenderness of some kind on hand, or several, running as it were, together; and it must not be imagined that there was anything incorrect in the young virgins of the place, who rallied each other, and were jealous of the attentions of this gentleman. The tone of the place was so odd, and gossip—i.e. scandal—so rife, that it was impossible for the most strict not to fall in with it, and be effleuré to a certain degree, but no further; and thus, reversing the common maxim, Virtue, paying this little homage to Vice, was allowed to go its own way and live in tranquillity. To the Dalrymple family Pigou was specially devoted. The three girls were all handsome and interesting, with a certain spiritual air and speech which made them yet more attractive. They were Catholics, but, in this community, religion never entered a moment into consideration, virtue again paying this trifling tax to her enemy. The pastor, sitting on a low chair, with his eyes fixed on Madeleine, the eldest, used to sometimes talk "beautifully," sometimes, on a sort of general and half-amatory principle, saying, "I often wish we had some of your religion. I should like people coming to lay open their hearts to me; I should like to lay open mine. If Madeleine came to me——" Then good Mrs. Dalrymple, greatly pleased, would enlarge on the subject, hoping to sow the good seed, not thinking that this was all the mere *theatricals* of conversation, and that the pastor was, if anything, known to be bigoted.

"With his languishing eyes and his voice," said the captain very often, "do you know, the fellow reminds me of the man that wrote all that about the Grisette and the starling. What's his name? Sterne! Sterne! that's the fellow. He's so like Sterne."

What elements, we say again, dramatic enough to make a hundred French plays! for not much is wanted to make an English one. What decayed leading ladies, what battered *sou-less jeunes premiers*!

Mr. Blacker passed a hundred little garrets high up in the air, where these unhappy exiles were burrowing, struggling through life somehow; now making jubilee on the arrival of a few pieces from the Happy Land, and coming forth as gay and in the best they could muster, as Mr. Wilson or Mr. Rupert Smith, and talking boastfully of "getting back to England—next month or so"—an important qualification. They were received without question or inquiry, until the time of want came on, and they had to burrow back again. So with the decayed

families struggling desperately, and fighting on—on a crust. The De Courcys, the Fitzmaurice Cravens, the Percy Grosvenors, the Langham Ryders, and many more, who entered gloriously, with sails and colours flying, and gradually sank into poor dirty condemned colliers. But still the tone of the public was generous, or rather, there was a secret understanding in the interest of all, that no one should be put on trial, no unworthy inquisition set on foot (always provided that nothing herein contained should be to the prejudice of scandal and gossip), or the result used in evidence against them. Once a fair appearance was made, society was satisfied. Hence came the value of that gathering at the Port; hence every nerve was strained to put in an appearance there, and hold your own on the Prado. Alas! the privations, the sore but genteel want, the pauperism, the desperate shifts, the mean resources of this colony, if all collected, would fill up one of the bitterest cups or caldrons known upon earth. Yet it was not the fault of the natives. They were enduring, kindly, self-denying, hoping against hope, and absurdly trustful. Where they found a true gentleman and family reduced and suffering, they were polite, and generous, and forbearing. And though rueful, would accept excuses for deferred payment cheerfully again and again. Generations of shabby swindling English succeeding each other overtaxed their patience, and have made them what they are now, suspicious, greedy, and merciless.

Mr. Blacker, having gone his rounds, looked in here, and had a word: "My dear ma'am—such an addition—charming people—the nicest—highly connected. Maxwell, my good friend, just go and leave your card—the nicest people—just come. I want to get a few—you know—just to help them on at first." Then he finished at the consul's office, pushing his way through people who were ordering wine, asking information, and bursting with complaints. "Here, Dick, a word with you a moment; a very important matter. Just step in with me." Then confidentially: "See here, Dick, some first-rate people just come; and we must help them along in every way. Really good people. Let Mrs. Dick call early; they'll like it, I have reason to know." Having got through a deal of "work" in the morning, Blacker went back to his new friends. They were really high-bred-looking people, according to the Dieppe standard—Mr. Beaufort particularly, and his brother, Ernest Beaufort, both very tall and officer-looking. Ernest showed the deepest contempt for the place, walking about with speed, contempt on his face, and loudly expressing his disgust—behaviour which at once made him an object of interest to the colony, and showed them that he really belonged to high life. The Misses Beaufort were tall flashy girls, and their mamma was presently to be pronounced the perfection of lady-like elegance.

CHAPTER VII. A PROPOSAL.

MR. GILBERT WEST, with a face at least a year younger in its expression than it was the night before, was in his apartments about two o'clock on the same day, reading an English newspaper with some distraction, for his mind was travelling away to other things more delightful. There was an under-current of complacency, because he now felt that his judgment had not been at fault. Suddenly Mr. Dacres, "Dacres the Delightful," as some admirers called him, came in, with his cheerful face composed almost to an expression of sorrow. He held his hand out: "My dear West, I have come to you to speak about last night. I can't say how grieved I am. The fact is, I am worried, harassed, hunted from post to pillar, and heart-sick and weary. My dear West, say you won't give it a thought; say you have forgotten."

"To be sure," said Mr. West; "it all passed from my mind in a second. I knew it was only the forgetfulness of the moment."

"Generous, generous always. Not a speck stains the pure glass. As my Lulu said to me, 'Mr. West, papa, is too noble not to dismiss it from his mind.' God help me, West, but I am in a miserable way."

The other looked grave. He knew this exordium pretty well.

"Such a time as I had of it over there. They don't know. I wouldn't they did for worlds. No, let me suffer; but keep it from them, West, my poor darlings at home. Most of this time, when they thought I was amusing myself, canvassing for parliament, and all that, where do you suppose I was—in the horrors of a jail."

This was true, and a very cheerful fortnight Mr. Dacres had spent in the Whitecross Prison of that day.

"It is very unfortunate," said Mr. West, gravely; "but I really don't know what to say. I have so often given advice, and—"

"You have, you have," said the other, "and it is none of your fault. Only all I am anxious for is to keep this from my own darlings at home. I have no spirits to carry it off. Would to Heaven I had! Yet, what must I appear to them? There's the thing. Poor little Lulu; what a home for her! She's not happy, West. Do you know, I remark a change in her since I have been away—marks as if a struggle were going on in her—a restless manner, a distraint look."

Mr. West had said many times over that he knew the character of Mr. Dacres in all its depths; that he was never taken in a moment by his sham bonhomie or maudlin warmth. Yet, at this moment, he was all interest and belief. Mr. Dacres saw it too. He looked round mysteriously.

"Shall I tell you what I suspect—what I know? Would I be thus frank with any other man but yourself, West? Would I taint her pure name by dragging it into such a humiliating confession? But it is in her interest, and I don't care what construction any man may put on it. You know my heart. Come here, West. I found it out before I was two hours in the house. I know her secret."

"Good Heavens!" said Mr. West, really agitated, "what do you mean?"

"What do I mean? I mean that I am glad and proud to know it; more glad than if I had one of their fifty thousand-franc pieces in my hand this moment. My dear West, do you suppose a man like me, that has knocked about browbeaten witnesses, and been browbeat myself by infernal tyrants of judges—that have been playing 'catch you, catch me,' with duns all my life—do you suppose I haven't learnt the use of my eyes yet? Ah, West, my dear fellow! I assure you, when I found it out, it sent a film of joy into this battered heart of mine."

"But," said Mr. West, now really agitated, "I must ask you to speak out—to be more clear. I may have an idea, but——"

"My dear, kind, old friend," said Mr. Dacres, rising to take his hand, "she loves you; my Lulu loves you with the whole of her fresh young heart; and I vow," he added, suddenly turning jocular, "I could just strike up 'Tol de lol lol,' like the old fathers in the play, I am so glad of it!"

Mr. West was now collected and cold. "I should be delighted if it were so," he said; "but I may ask, how do you know—how are you sure?"

"My dear fellow, we are both men of the world—at least *you* are. I have picked up something in my day—but no matter. What I have told you I *know*. I assure you I have thought the thing over often the long nights when they had me in that *quod* of a place over there. And when I considered what *was* to become of them if I was removed in any other way, it used to drive me mad almost. Then I used to pray some good, sensible, practical, matured man would be raised up, that my little Lulu could lean on; not a whipper-snapper who would neglect her, perhaps, or use her ill; but a *man*, young, too, but past folly. I don't care about myself. I am weary of the whole thing. But it would be a comfort to me to know she was being taken care of."

"Most true and a most just feeling," said the other, hurriedly; "but one thing I should like to know. On what is all this founded? For there should be something more——"

"Well, I'll tell you; and I don't care about the shame of it. But candour is my maxim. I know what you'll say—unfair, shabby, and all that. So it was. But I couldn't help it. I had a struggle for it. But I am a weak, helpless creature when it comes to that. Well, West, see here. This is the poor little thing's diary——"

"Oh!" said Mr. West, starting back; "you couldn't bring yourself to pry into *that*——"

"I knew he'd take it this way," said Mr. Dacres, sadly. "I am a wretched fellow, I know. But here it is for you in her own black and white: 'I am fighting against the influence'—the creature. 'He controls me with a look'——"

"I cannot," said Mr. West, walking about in great agitation. "You must not try me in this way. It was very wrong. It is not fair to her."

"No more it is," said Mr. Dacres, gazing at

the book with a sort of stupid ruefulness; "no more it is. See here again: 'I was rude to him, because I dare not trust myself.' Well, all I say is, take what view you like of it, West. I know it's all for you, and that's what I've to say. I couldn't see her wasting before my eyes and not interfere, even in my own awkward way. I mean well. But there's the truth for you; and whatever way you take it, my dear fellow, it will be all one to the poor devil now addressing you, who hasn't a napoleon at this moment he can call his own."

That impoverished condition of things did not last more than five minutes, when a happier train of thought set in.

"You are a good angel, a generous friend indeed; and I'll never forget your kindness."

"Don't mention it," said Mr. West, hastily; "but I hardly know what to say or to do. All I beg of you is, do nothing more in the matter—for a time, at least. I would not for the world there should be interference with her."

"Take time—that's just what I want. Not a blessed word shall pass my lips, you may depend. But come up as usual; mind, we'll look out for you. Come to-day at four, and talk to them, for I am not in spirits."

When Dacres had gone, West, as it were, resolved himself into a council. Gauging, as he did to the utmost nicety, the height and depth, the habitual exaggeration, of Mr. Dacres, he felt, by comparison of other things with the letter of the night before, that what he had described must be true. Applying the same test—her looks, her strange embarrassments, her wilfulness, and impatience—considering these as he would a legal case sent to him for advice and opinion, he could not but feel that he had some warrant for his wishes. But when he came to picture her in that dismal home, with that father who, barely tolerable now in his strange fluctuations of good humour and maudlin depression, would with years grow worse, and turn their house into an abode of tipsy squalor and disorder—the most miserable surrounding in the world for a young creature. Then those odious words of his sister—"at your time of life," and "double her age"—came back on him with a sort of chill; but again he brought his quiet legal examination to bear, putting the most strength against himself. After all, he surprised himself saying "Forty-two is not an old man."

Mr. Dacres went home with alacrity, merely pausing on his way to have a little sup of the cherry B, the only thing, as he said, that could put heart into a poor persecuted creature like himself. But he was now in spirits.

"By Jove!" he said, "I think I hit the jury hard there. That touch about the diary would have carried the case; it was risky, Dacres, my lad, but beautifully done—exquisitely neat. Here's the use of knowing human nature. I knew he'd be too high-toned, too delicate, to look at my Loo's scribbling. So far, so good. But I have the real pinch before me now."

What the real pinch was we shall see shortly.

He went home whistling and singing,
 "There's a light in her eye
 That mirrors the sky,
 And she is the loveliest girl of them all!"—

an amatory song, which he gave with great feeling and rollicking affection at the bar dinners. Strange to say, no one ever reckoned on strains of a comic sort from the capital boon companion; and it does somehow seem appropriate that creatures like the delightful barrister should contribute strains rather of sentiment.

CHAPTER VIII. "POOR PAPA."

MISS LULU was in their little but bright drawing-room, which by her long residence had gained all its brightness and daintiness. She was looking after her flowers, trimming up, giving a touch here, a touch there, when her parent came in. "Oh, papa," she cried, "how happy I am! so delighted to have you here again; and we'll take our first walk together down to the port to-day. Shan't we, papa?"

Mr. Dacres, who had with difficulty checked himself from bursting into the most cheerful troll about

The light in her eye
 That mirrors the sky,

as he came up-stairs, now became intensely suddenly gloomy and desponding.

"My poor Lulu, I have been thinking of you all day: taking you about with me On my lonely round—my lonely round."

Another of the songs was near intruding—the ever-popular "All's well." Lucy laid down her sewing hastily, and ran to kiss him. She became conscious of very recent "cherry B," but it did not for a moment weaken her faith in his grief.

"Well, dear," he went on, "you love poor old papsey, don't you, in spite of all his shortcomings, which are enough, Heaven knows?"

"My dear old Harco, I shall always be your little Lulu, no matter what you are, no matter what little troubles come. You must make up your mind to have me always with you."

"No, dear, no," he said, hastily. "Oh, not for the world, my child. That's what's been in my mind all this long time away in England, when you and your poor mamma thought, naturally, I was amusing myself getting made into an M.P., and all that. I didn't like to distress your poor little heart last night, by talking of my own selfish troubles; but I assure you I was busy with a very different set of electors. Ah! it's weary, weary work."

Lucy understood perfectly, and stood looking at him with the deepest grief and mortification.

"The worst, my child, yes, the worst your little heart can conjure up. Only nothing to mamma about it. Hush! Nothing to poor mamma. I'll get used to it in time, I dare say. It's only a little humiliating at first. But I believe it can be managed privately and delicately. Oh dear, yes! And in the end you come rather to like it."

She was listening as if something was piercing

her slowly, her eyes distending, her chest heaving.

"Indeed, my poor child," he went on, "I never thought it would have come to that; never indeed. I suppose their unclean touch will cleave to me for many a long day; and I suppose more of it's before me. So I had best accustom myself in time. People think, because I keep up a show of fun and jollity, that Harcourt Dacres is case-hardened; but the iron has now entered my soul—the iron has entered my soul." He seemed to dwell with satisfaction on the intrusion of this foreign body, and repeated the phrase over several times. But what he hinted at completely overwhelmed his daughter. She remained gazing at him with such a look of hopeless misery, that he was distressed.

"And what's to become of the poor hunted papa," he went on, "I'm sure I can't say. Once this has set in, I'm sure it'll go on. Once the ice is broken, you know, pet— Well, I'll tell you what was coming home to me all that time. I was thinking what was to become of my poor little Lulu. Was I to have you sinking—sinking before my eyes, with a shabby struggling going on, and a mouldiness spreading over you? Would to Heaven, I'd say to myself, I could see her well married to a sound, faithful, sensible, well-to-do man, and then she'd be saved from all this profanation, as I call it, and perhaps save her poor broken father too. Give him a start like a gentleman. My goodness, Lulu," he went on, rising suddenly, and walking about, "that is only what I want—a start—a start. All these men say to me—great swells, too—'Dacres, my boy, if you had your arms free, you'd have the game in your hands.' There it is. I know I have. I don't want those fools to tell me so. Which of them can touch me at a speech, I'd like to know? Not a man of 'em could humbug a jury as I can. Why, I'd go ahead like a comet with a fiery tail, and have them all staring after me, and saying 'Who the devil's that fellow?' But the next thing is, where's the start to come from? Instead of that, it will get worse and worse, and every day worse and worse decay."

That word seemed to make her shrink again. What he had said about "unclean touch" came on her like a weight. Answering her own thoughts more than him, she said, hurriedly:

"Let us escape from that. Oh yes, at all risks. I would do anything in the world—"

"Tell me now, dear," said he, suddenly, "do you like him—our friend, that—"

"Mr. West?" she said.

"That's it!" said he, "that is what I have set my old broken heart on. *There's* a man, sensible, clever, wise, that any girl in the United Kingdom might be proud to get. That's what would be the making of you, and of us all; that's what would rejoice papa's poor hunted heart! Then *adieu* to the persecutions, and we'd all live happily together for ever and ever after, without a care," in *secula seculorum*!"

"Ah! papa," said she hastily, "I would

do anything to save us from that thing you spoke of——”

“Hush!” said her father; “never go back to that, my dear; we’ve done with it, *I hope*. But he loves you. A heart of steel—true to the very core—any girl might be proud to win him. Just the right age too—little over thirty. Why, I wouldn’t see you joined to one of those schoolboy whipper-snappers; no, I’d sooner have you single all your life. But you know it—you’ve found it out long ago. Don’t tell me; only half an hour ago he came to me with his little story, and I felt for him, I did, Lulu. You know he seemed to feel sore: he’s as tender and delicate an organisation as a child.”

“I didn’t mean to say anything to hurt him; no, indeed,” said she, eagerly. “He is the last person in the world I would like to wound. I wrote to him to say so.”

Mr. Dacres’s eyes twinkled. “Ah, *that* was what brought him to it. I see now; I was wondering——”

“And, papa,” she said, thoughtfully, “and he really made you this proposal to-day?”

“Solemnly and seriously, he did.”

“I like him,” she went on in some agitation, “and always did, and admire him, too—his great gifts, his talents, his honour; but——”

“But what, my dear? I know now what’s passing in that little mind of yours; you never let this next or nigh you? Eh? You’d have gone on without thinking more of it? Eh? You don’t feel that burning affection—the lying awake at nights? Why, that’s all gone out now, *that’s* only in the novels and foolish school-girls’ heads! As for waiting for a beautiful man to rise out of the earth and perform prodigies, and full of lovely sentiment and a low voice, *that*, my dear, is a luxury only for the rich and comfortable; we’re not entitled to that.”

“No, papa,” she said, with a little vehemence. “I am no fool of that sort, thank Heaven! But this is so strange—so odd——”

“Strange! nonsense! Why, haven’t I seen it over and over again. Wasn’t there little Wilson, on the circuit, a man of a good sound fifty years, if he was a day; but as clever and sweet a minded fellow as ever held a brief. Well, when he met a pretty little girl, who would have died outright if she had not married him, no one was in the least surprised. There was Rogers, fifty-six if he was an hour; he and his wife, a child of twenty or a little over. I could tell you loads of instances; and take it at the worst, my dear, is it such a punishment for a set of paupers like us? for we are that, Heaven knows. And not one that’s gone through what I have.”

She answered him quickly:

“Yes, yes, papa; anything but that. I am sure I could be happy with him; he is so kind, and noble, and generous; and I promise you I will try my best to do what you say. It is the best and only course—I am *sure* of it; and I shall begin to understand it all soon.”

Mr. Dacres, quite overcome at this unex-

pected adhesion, folded her in his arms and clasped her to his breast.

“You are a good-natured, sensible child,” he said, “and I am proud of you indeed. There is not one girl in a hundred—ay, in a hundred thousand—would have the tact to do as you have done. You are as wise as a woman twenty years older, and will be rewarded for it, mind I tell you; for when they marry their young skipjacks, who soon lead them a life, you will have a steady, clever, faithful man, who will never forget you, and make it the study of his life to reward you. I declare I feel as light as a feather after this. I shall sleep—oh, so lightly!—to-night, petsy.”

This result was nothing very special, as the learned gentleman, even at the most critical seasons, never lost an hour’s repose.

“You know,” she said, with a smile, “I don’t want to have you think of any grand sacrifice, or anything of *that* sort; only what you have said has come as a sort of surprise to me. I know this, I am always so glad when Mr. West comes, and find great delight in listening to him, and am a little sorry when he goes away. So I suppose——”

“Ah! go ‘long, you little humbugging witch, you! Why, that’s love—love all over!”

“Hush, papa!” she said, looking round. “No—regard—esteem; but it is no matter. Only, dearest, you must promise me this—you must wait, and let matters take their own way. Leave it all to me.”

“Deed, then, I will,” he said, patting her head; “and it couldn’t be in better hands. I’ll move neither hand, leg, nor foot in it.”

He was greatly pleased, and went up to “dress”—an operation only kept for seasons of high festival. When he had gone his way chanting the interrupted “Light of her eyes,” the girl sank down in a chair very thoughtfully, and, with something like youthful wrinkles on her forehead, remained for nearly half an hour. Her young head was working the thing out—a habit of hers. At last she heard the French clock strike; it was getting to the time for the “Corso,” and she rose, saying softly, “That degradation would kill me! Anything to save us from *that*!”

GENERAL JAMES OGLETHORPE.

THE world soon forgets its real workers. Unless there has been something in their career so specially romantic that poems and pictures are made in their honour, or unless they were so entirely the culminating point and representative of their age that they appear like its forming power, they get done away with and forgotten. Their deeds, which live after them, live without recognition or assignment. If you speak of one of these forgotten worthies, people ask, “Who was he? I never heard his name before. What did he do? When did he live?” How many times these

questions have been asked about General James Oglethorpe, since the appearance of Mr. Robert Wright's Memoir* has made his name familiar! A man, whom Pope celebrated, and Johnson honoured, who preceded Howard in prison reformation, and who founded a state which has since become one of the most famous of the American Union—a man who held the place of a leader in his lifetime, and who did the noble work of reformation and creation, has passed out of men's memories altogether. He has not been crystalised, so to speak, by poem, picture, or household allusion, and his name has, therefore, run into sand; from which, however, it has now been dug out.

James Oglethorpe was the son of the Sir Theophilus and Lady Oglethorpe who figure in the Warming-pan story concerning the birth of James the Second's Prince of Wales. But, though the story has long since been discarded as an invention of the enemy, there are a few discrepancies about dates and registers, which Mr. Wright cannot quite explain away, that seem to point to a substitution of sons in the Oglethorpe family. Whether true or false, they have nothing to do with the story on hand, and it does not, in the least degree, signify to us whether this James who founded Georgia, was the real and original James as is assumed, or only a younger son translated to the name and position of the elder boy after the Warming-pan plot had got cold and its embers had died away. Neither does it affect us, at this distance of time, to know that the Oglethorpe family was good and the Oglethorpe blood blue. Our interest lies in knowing what the man himself was, and not what his forefathers were; in learning what he did to set the crooked world somewhat straighter, and not what was done by a generation of roaring old savages, some hundreds of years ago, to get more beeves and land to their own share than their neighbours had, and by what means of craft, bullying, or manslaughter these were obtained, as was most convenient to the matter on hand. However, worthless as it may be to know, we are told that the General was of a good old family—that he was an "Oxonian," like his brothers before him—that, like them, he soon left Alma Mater for the rougher life of a soldier, and served under Prince Eugene, who made him, first, his secretary, and then his aide-de-camp—that he was at the battle of Peterwaraden and at the siege of Belgrade. "'Pray, General,' said Doctor Johnson, 'give us an account of the siege of Belgrade.' Upon which the old warrior poured a little wine on the table, and with a wet finger described every position, saying, 'Here we were, and here were the Turks,' and so on, while the Doctor listened with the closest attention."

When peace was concluded between the Austrian Emperor and the Sultan (1718), Oglethorpe was left without active employment. Knowing

nothing better to do, he returned to England; and, on the death of his elder brother, succeeded to the family mansion and estate, Westbrook, near Godalming. It may as well be told, here, that after his death Westbrook was bought by Godbold, the famous proprietor of the Vegetable Balsam, "when that popular quack doctor placed a figure of Fame upon the parapet of the house, of which he published an engraving, with dog-grel lines, eulogistic of himself and his nostrum." There is a tradition, too, that the Pretender was once secreted at Westbrook; and a vault is shown wherein he could be concealed in a case of emergency. He used to walk in the avenues early in the morning and late in the evening, wrapped in a large cloak like Edgar Ravenswood; whereby he passed for a ghost with such of the intelligent rustics as chanced to see him. Lady Oglethorpe warmly encouraged this ghost theory. It was convenient, and kept intruders, who might make themselves unpleasant, off the grounds.

In 1722, James Oglethorpe began his parliamentary career as the member for Haslemere, which seems to have been a family seat for the Westbrook people. He began at a critical moment, just at the time when the Jacobins, encouraged by the popular discontent occasioned by the bursting of the South Sea bubble, began to think of making a new attempt to restore the Stuarts; when George the First was informed by the Regent of France that a conspiracy was on foot against his government; and when the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Orerry, Doctor Atterbury, and others, were haled off to the Tower. But James Oglethorpe was a wise man and a prudent, and, though by family tradition and association a Jacobite at heart—or, let us say, "a sympathiser with the Stuarts"—yet he saw clearly that the bonny Prince Charlie game was played out in England, and that the only thing to do was to accept the inevitable Guelph, and make the best of him. Consequently he was loyal to the reigning house, an independent member, and a strong Tory—in all that he undertook, carrying good sense, energy, and practicability, and never letting a theory run away with his judgment.

In those days lived a certain Mr. Robert Castell, called in the fashion of the times "an ingenious gentleman;" an architect by taste and knowledge though not by profession, who ran through all his money, as many ingenious gentlemen have done before him, and will again. He was arrested and carried to a sponging-house attached to the Fleet Prison, and kept by one Corbett, an underling of the warden. On giving security, by virtue of "presents," as they were called, to the latter, whose name was Thomas Bambridge, he obtained the liberty of the rules; but at length becoming no longer able to gratify the warden's appetite for refreshers, that insatiate officer ordered him to be re-committed to Corbett's, where the small-pox then raged. Poor Castell, having informed Bambridge that he had never had that disease, and was in great dread of it, earnestly implored to be sent to some other

* A Memoir of General James Oglethorpe. By Robert Wright.

sponging-house, or even into the jail itself. But though the monster's own subordinates were moved to compassion, and endeavoured to dissuade him from his purpose, he forced his unhappy prisoner into the infected house, where he caught the small-pox, of which he died after a few days, leaving a large family in the greatest distress, and with his last breath charging Bambridge as his murderer.

He was a poor friend and protégé of Oglethorpe's, who, if he could not discharge his debts, yet went often to see him, to carry him such comfort and consolation as he could. And the miseries, wrongs, and oppressions which he saw in his frequent visits to the Fleet, set him on the track of prison amelioration about thirty years before Howard began his great career. After the usual parliamentary preliminaries, a Prison Visiting Committee was appointed, of which Mr. James Oglethorpe was named chairman, with the prospect of plenty of work on hand, of dense tracts of opposition to be traversed, of monstrous abuses to be removed if possible, and of untiring energy to meet them with. The Fleet Prison was taken first. The Fleet had been originally designed and used for the confinement of the prisoners committed by the Star Chamber, and the warden was ex-officio an officer of parliament. When the Star Chamber was abolished, the privileges of the warden of the Fleet to receive fees from archbishops, bishops, peers, and others of lower degree, or to put such persons in irons, was abolished, and the prison itself appropriated to the use and confinement of debtors, and persons committed for contempt of court. But the wardens, caring nothing for acts of parliament and what they abolished, still went on with their extortions and cruelties, putting such of the prisoners as could not pay their fees into irons, if they thought that would bring them money, or if it was pleasant to them to take revenge on impetuosity; besides otherwise ill-treating and oppressing the poor wretches, all the same as if they had right and the law on their side. The warden's office, which had been given originally to Sir Jeremy Whichcot and his heirs, "together with that of the keeper of the old palace at Westminster, with the shops in Westminster Hall, and certain tenements adjoining the Fleet," was now a mere matter of sale and barter. Lord Clarendon had sold it for five thousand pounds to one John Huggins, and Huggins re-sold it in 1728 to Bambridge, who fell upon evil days, and Robert Castell, and Mr. James Oglethorpe's Committee for Prison Visiting.*

On their first visit, February 27, 1729, the committee found Sir William Rich in irons, because of some dispute between him and the warden. They ordered him to be set free from his chains, but they had no sooner left than Bambridge fastened them on again. And the next day, when the committee unexpectedly revisited the prison, they found Sir William loaded as before.

For which contempt of court Bambridge was ordered into the custody of the sergeant-at-arms, Oglethorpe, as chairman, bringing the case before the House. He was not a man to be trifled with by wardens of the Fleet or others, and so the world found out before long.

Nothing could be more horrible or more iniquitous than the arrangements and life of the Fleet in those days. There were two sides, the "Common Side" and the "Masters' Side." On the common side were those wards called the Upper Chapel, the Lower Chapel, and Julius Cæsar's; and into these wards were crammed ninety-three persons, many of them too poor to pay for a bed or even the shilling a week which was the price of a share of one, and so lying on the bare boards. The Women's Ward and the Lion's Den were equally bad. On the chapel stairs were rooms let at five pounds yearly to those who could afford to pay the rent, and on "the same floor were cells containing wretches who were uncertain what chamber rent they were compelled to pay, being, as they said, at the mercy of the warden." Here even the sick lay on the floor; and two women with small-pox were put together in the same bed, and made to pay two and tenpence a week for the accommodation. The Masters' Side was somewhat less ghastly than this, and the fees were higher; but not always certain to secure what they had bought, even when paid. For Bambridge, when he wanted money, used to turn his prisoners from ward to ward, and from the Masters' Side to the Common Side, sometimes putting the more spirited into irons, and taming the courage of the bold by locking them up in dungeons till they had paid for their freedom and better treatment. But though he made a good thing of his prisoners, he made a better, sometimes, of their liberty, and connived at the escape of such as could and would pay him sufficiently well, without much thought as to whether he went with the law or against it. He let many escape; among the rest one Boyce, a smuggler, charged, at the king's suit, with over thirty thousand pounds.

On the 20th of March the first report of the committee appointed three weeks before was presented to the House. Huggins, Bambridge, and others, were directed to be prosecuted for their crimes; but unfortunately the two principal scoundrels were acquitted—Huggins, on the charge of murder, and Bambridge, first for murder and then for felony. He was, however, dismissed as warden, and a bill was brought in for the better regulation of the Fleet. Two months after, a second report was presented to the House, this time including the Marshalsea and the Palace Court prison of Westminster. Sir Philip Meadows was Knight-Marshal at this time; but he had appointed one John Darby as his deputy, and Darby had sold his post and all the profits accruing to a butcher named Acton, for three hundred and forty pounds yearly. Acton seems to have been greater in the art of oppression than even Bambridge himself; and the Marshalsea must have been a real hell upon

* See page 251 of the present volume.

earth. In low rooms, not sixteen feet square, as many as fifty miserable sinners were locked up from eight to eight, and upon no occasion whatever could any of them get out. Some slept on the floor, but as all could not sleep there, they had an aerial tier of hammocks; by which ingenious contrivance many died for want of fresh air, as they did in the Black Hole of Calcutta. The sick wards were worse. "Along the walls of each room boards were laid upon trestles, 'like a dresser in a kitchen;' and under these boards, between the trestles, one tier of sick men lay upon the floor; on the 'dresser' was another tier; and overhead a third in hammocks." When a poor prisoner had no more money, and had exhausted his friends, and eaten up his possessions, if he could raise a final and funereal threepence, which was the nurse's fee, he was carried into the sick ward, where he lingered till he died. A day never passed without a death; and in spring time from eight to ten prisoners died every twenty-four hours. Many people left money for the poor debtors, but the jailer and the lodge-keepers got the benefit of the donation; so they did with the begging-box; and so they did when good Samaritans came, as was the custom, to discharge certain of the poor debtors. For the lodge-keepers had always a gang of idle hangers-on, who were their messengers and tools—voluntary prisoners who got free quarters for their dirty work, and had as much liberty as they wanted; and when there was to be a release, these men were put forward, and their pretended debts and fees paid by the Samaritan dupes who knew no better, to the jollification of the butcher and his comrades. Some of the debts for which men were confined in those days were very small: perhaps a shilling; but the fees to the jailer, and the "garnish" to be paid to the other prisoners, and the fines for every possible occasion, were tremendous; and to be arrested for a trifle was with many to be ruined for life. When any poor fellow could not pay these fees and garnishes, he was mobbed by the others, who stripped him of his clothes—"let the black dog walk," they called it—and otherwise ill-treated him. Once Acton put the thumb-screw on one man, then carried him to the strong-room, and all that strangled him. For all of these and worse infamies he was tried, the indictment charging him with murder; but, strange to say, he, too, was acquitted, like his brothers in crime and office. Though not all, nor perhaps very much, yet something was done by Oglethorpe's committee for the amelioration of these loathsome dens; and magistrates were appointed to meet during the recess to adjust the fees of every debtors' prison, and to make other useful laws. Mr. Wright does not say to what result; and we all know what Howard found when he undertook to cleanse the Augean stables—sadly in want of ventilation and flushed sewers.

His experience of what poor debtors underwent turned Oglethorpe's attention to the unemployed, impecunious class generally, and perhaps originated the second great work un-

dertaken for the good of his generation, and the well-being of society at large. A Tory, yet as much of a free trader as perhaps was possible in those days, he opposed the bill of the Commons, introduced for protecting the West Indian sugar trade, by prohibiting all commerce between the French islands of the Pacific and our North American colonies. "Our colonies are all a part of our dominions," he said, with more common sense than his hearers possessed. "The people in every one of them are our own people, and we ought to show an equal respect to all." "I remember, sir, that there was once a petition presented to this House by one county, complaining that they were very much injured in their trade, as to the sale of beans, by another; therefore they modestly prayed that the other county should be prohibited to sell any beans!" "Ote-toi que je m'y mets," said the Frenchman, unconsciously epitomising the whole theory of protection, as instanced by this story of the beans. He was also on the side of Poor Jack, and wrote a pamphlet called "The Sailor's Advocate," exposing the evils of impressment, and the abuses of the Admiralty; and in many other ways showed himself a sturdy philanthropist and practical reformer. And then, in 1732, he and twenty-one associates petitioned the throne for an act of incorporation, and obtained a charter, dated June 9, 1732, for establishing the colony of Georgia, in America, on the south-eastern frontier of South Carolina—with the Spaniards in Florida as troublesome neighbours, the Indians thick in the forests round about, and runaway negroes banded together under arms, as the three active enemies to be encountered. At present these troubles fell upon the South Carolinians; wherefore they were extremely anxious that a new British colony should be planted between them and the recognised limits of the Spanish possessions.

A new colony between South Carolina and Florida had long been a subject of thought and consideration, but as yet no one had seen the way to any practical solution of the difficulties attending. Sir Robert Montgomery, of Skelmorley, had drawn out a magnificent scheme for a settlement to be called the Margravate of Azilia; but the margravate, with its magnificent cities and parks, did not get under weigh somehow; and then Oglethorpe took up the question, and proposed his scheme of simple colonisation—as much for straitened gentlefolks as for labourers, for the poor fellows who else would fall into the hands of Bambridges, or the Actons of the Fleet, or the Marshalsea. The scheme took; parliament approved, and the public supported. The new colony was organised by trustees who were bound by their charter to receive no fees, perquisites, salary, nor profits from the undertaking—who might not hold land, either openly or by proxy, and who were simply guardians and promoters of the cause. Large subscriptions were made, and parliament gave them a grant of ten thousand pounds. On the 6th of November,

1732, the first batch of emigrants embarked on board the *Anne*, at Gravesend; and on the 15th, Oglethorpe, "in the prime of life, very handsome, tall, and manly, dignified, but not austere—the beau ideal of an English gentleman," with means—followed his poorer clients, and set sail next day. There were a hundred and twenty emigrants, their governor—our hero—Mr. Herbert, a clergyman of the Church of England and the chaplain of the expedition, and Mr. Amatis, a Piedmontese, to teach the art of rearing silkworms and winding silk; Georgia being supposed peculiarly fitted for this industry, and Sir Thomas Lombe's patent for silk-weaving handy at home for working up the colonial produce.

The first fortunes of the colony were like all first fortunes. Some disappointment and some confusion, wrangling, friendships, Indian raids and pow-wows in alternation, Spanish difficulties, prosperity on the one hand and adversity on the other, to hold men's minds in an even balance; but, on the whole, progress and advancement, and the foundations laid for happiness and future power. Presently some Salzburg Protestants joined the English emigrants; but as they desired to be by themselves, they went from Charlestown, where they first landed, up the Savannah, and founded Ebenezer, their place of rest in a new world. On General Oglethorpe's second visit to Georgia—for he left after sixteen months' sojourn there—he took with him as spiritual aids and missionaries both John and Charles Wesley; the latter as his private secretary in excess of his missionary functions. But after a time the pleasant relations hitherto existing between himself and the young men became somewhat chilled and roughened, and we find Charles complaining of harshness and increasing coldness; while women, always at the back of all disagreements between men, mixed themselves up in the quarrel, and made life very bitter to the private secretary. Oglethorpe charged Charles with mutiny and sedition, and with stirring up the people to desert the colony. They had a quarrel, too, about formalism, the governor wishing for more love and meekness and true religion, and less formal prayer, and the missionary putting his trust in sermons and public ordinances; and things got to such a pass between them that, if what he says in his journal is true, poor Charles was much to be pitied, and his master not a little to be condemned. After bearing up against a great deal of petty insolence from the servants and low people about—his linen returned to him unwashed, people shrinking from him if he came in their way, and the like—his spirit at last gave way; he took a fever, and went to his bed. But "on the 6th of April, before he had quite recovered," says Mr. Wright, "he jots down what must not be withheld, hard though it be to credit: 'To-day Mr. Oglethorpe gave away my bedstead from under me, and refused to spare one of the carpenters to mend me another.'"

John came over to his afflicted brother to give

advice and consolation. He was received by Oglethorpe with "abundant kindness," and the next day preached from the text: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" His journal had this note: "In every one of the six following days, I had some fresh proofs of the absolute necessity of following that advice of the apostle: 'Judge not before the time;'" and he makes no remark concerning the differences between his brother and the governor. Charles having peevishly come to a resolution "which honour and indignation had formed," to starve himself rather than ask for necessities, John dissuaded him from it, and so returned to Savannah, leaving, it is to be hoped, things a little sweeter and smoother between the belligerents. Judging from this distance of time, unworped by passion or prejudice on either side, one can easily understand how it was that General Oglethorpe—strong, capable, practical, energetic—and a Wesley as missionary and secretary, could not pull well together; for all that the elder man had an "almost paternal affection" for the younger, and was, moreover, a sincere Christian and an ardent philanthropist. But the Wesleys were strange people; even among themselves given to strife and contention about the best method of showing forth Christian graces and a godly conversation; so that it was not much to be wondered at if they quarrelled with the general, not in all things a man of God, according to their way of distributing class merit. However, things got straight after a time, and before they finally parted, the secretary and his master were as good friends as ever; which says something for both, seeing how rare it is for misunderstandings to be done away with when once they have been set up.

It would be impossible to give even a rapid account of all that Oglethorpe did to make that Georgian colony a success. He made friends with the Indians, and beat off the Spaniards; founded new establishments, and laid down roads; punished revolt; soothed dissatisfaction; fortified his new-made towns and villages; fought the Spanish fleet, and cut his way through it gallantly; repressed the extra zeal and officiousness of Whitefield, the missionary, whom also he had taken to be a thorn in his side, and who, according to the notion generally of missionaries, had gone considerably beyond his powers, and exceeded all legal authorisation; and then finally returned home to be tried by court-martial, on the complaints of one William Cooke—but to be tried only to be honourably acquitted. After which he gradually faded out of sight as a public character, married, retired, lived to a good old age, and died in the July of 1785, after the Declaration of Independence, which made his little colony of Georgia an independent State.

"Whose wicked eloquence was it that helped to bring about this mighty revolution?" adds Mrs. Hannah More, when detailing her meeting with the general. The whole extract, though, is too characteristic to be omitted. "I have got a new admirer," she writes to

her sister in 1784, "and we flirt together prodigiously; it is the famous General Oglethorpe, perhaps the most remarkable man of his time. He was foster-brother to the Pretender, and is much above ninety years old; the finest figure of a man you ever saw. He perfectly realises all my ideas of Nestor. His literature is great; his knowledge of the world is extensive, and his faculties as bright as ever. He is one of the three persons still living who was mentioned by Pope; Lord Mansfield and Lord Marchmont are the other two. He was the intimate friend of Southern, the tragic poet, and all the wits of his time. He is, perhaps, the oldest man of a gentleman living. I went to see him the other day, and he would have entertained me by repeating passages from Sir Eldred (Sir Eldred of the Bower: a Legendary Poem. Hannah More's first original work, published in 1775). He is quite a *preux chevalier*, heroic, romantic, and full of the old gallantry."

Early in 1785, Samuel Rogers, then a young man of twenty-one, met General Oglethorpe at the sale of Dr. Johnson's library. He says he was "then very, very old, the flesh of his face like parchment. He amused us youngsters by talking of the alterations that had been made in London, and of the great additions it had received within his recollection. He said that he had shot snipes in Conduit-street."

And Walpole, in the same year, speaks of him to Sir Horace Mann as youthful at ninety-five, when compared with himself, twenty years his junior. "His eyes, ears, articulation, limbs, and memory would suit a boy, if a boy could recollect a century. His teeth are gone; he is a shadow, and a wrinkled one; but his spirits and his spirit are in full bloom. Two years and a half ago he challenged a neighbouring gentleman for trespassing on his manor."

There was no gradual decay of this abundant vitality—no sinking down into the childishness and helplessness of old age. He died as he had lived, in full vigour; carried off unexpectedly by a violent fever; thus keeping, to the last, the same energy and power that had distinguished him throughout.

This then was General Oglethorpe, whom Mr. Robert Wright has disinterred from the neglect and dust of the past, "the finest figure of a man we have ever seen," and one who did honour to his country and his time.

HEART'S-EASE AND FORGET-ME-NOTS.

Oh, wherefore dost thou mock my grief

With such sweet gifts as these?

For me, if I forget thee not,

There can be no "heart's ease."

To think of thee is still to love,

In vain to hope, to pine,

To dream a dream of blissful life

That may be never mine.

That heart doth scarcely live whose life

Is in the past, the lost—

The motions of a living death

Are all that it can boast.

The heart that glows with vigorous warmth
A *living* love doth need—
A quickening, ever-during hope
Its energies to feed.

Be not unkind, to bid me go,
Yet bid me not forget;
Remembering thee, my life will be
But one long lone regret.

Thou would'st not wound my soul past cure,
Then rack me not with aught
That can bring back my grief and thee
To fancy, sense, or thought.

Take back thy flowers; if near thee, no
Forget-me-nots I need,
For in thine eyes, as blue as they,
The sweet request I read.

Take back thy flowers; for by thy side
The dreariest scene can please;
And, parted from thee, Eden's self
For me hath no heart's ease.

Oh, take them back, and give to me
Thine own sweet self in place;
I seem to feel their meaning most
When gazing on thy face.

THE SCHOOLMASTER AT HOME.

PROBABLY, fifteen years ago, the national education mania was at its height. In some curious way, scarcely now to be traced, that part of the nation consisting of the upper and middle classes had suddenly awakened to the necessity of educating the lower class. Though made late, the discovery was startling, and so were its results. Whether or not the movement took a proper form, was properly directed, and has borne good fruit, may be matter of opinion. Whether, also, it aimed too high, and failed in proportion, may be again matter of opinion; perhaps we cannot as yet arrive at any very accurate judgment. Of this, however, there can be no doubt—too much was made of the children who were to be educated. The class of children hitherto almost utterly neglected suddenly assumed a fictitious value. Their importance being rated, results were expected which the circumstances of the case did not warrant. The village children were no longer to pass their days in idleness and enjoyment, for the squire or clergyman had established a school, engaged a certificated master, and the school must be filled. The master furnished himself with pupil-teachers, and the work went on. He lectured on English history, geography, natural history, grammar, and "common things;" did a little Greek and Latin, and extremely little in reading, writing, and arithmetic. The clergyman was only a little less proud of his school than the master; it was a thing to be made much of and exhibited, and every one he could lay his hands on must visit the school, whether they cared for it or not. Thus, the children were trotted out to their own, and generally their visitors' entire satisfaction; the wonderful

attainments of the village school were spread abroad; every one was anxious to hear, and for a time national school visiting became the fashion. Like all human institutions, it is a mixture of good and evil. The evil which it principally wrought in those days was that it greatly encouraged, if it did not originate, the almost natural desire to show off, and make the knowledge of the children appear to be greater than it really was. Visitors expected to hear the names of the Cinque Ports, the latitude of Peking, the particulars of the wars of the Roses, the overland route to India, perhaps all about botany, and the roots of such and such words. Where, then, was the time of the master to teach the two subjects which ought chiefly to engross his attention in a village school? School inspectors assisted in the same evil greatly. In those days the object of the inspector seemed to be to get rid of the lower classes of a school as soon as possible, and then put the upper ones through a severe course of English history, grammar, and geography, for the edification of the numerous visitors. All this tended to make the children, and particularly the pupil-teachers, conceited, and to imagine that their education was completed, when it was scarcely begun. By-and-by the number of school-visitors decreased, the attraction was old, new things arose, and masters had begun to discover that the chief aim of a national school was not to make an exhibition of it. They left off lecturing, and took to working quietly, making the children do more; so there was less for visitors to hear, and consequently they were less interested. The system has now, probably, found its proper place, national school visitors being almost entirely confined to those who really take some interest in the education of the poor.

But to come to particulars. National school visitors may be divided into *two* classes:

First, those who stop at the school door; and, second, those who enter the school.

The first class consists of many and very dissimilar people—the children's parents, travellers in the book line, beggars, the vendors of herrings, nuts, oranges, and other unconsidered trifles, Lancashire weavers, Coventry ribbon-men, decayed schoolmasters from Cornwall and Northumberland, deputations from men on strikes, itinerant exhibitors of magic lanterns, and many others.

Parents, or more properly mothers, always seem to think they have a vested right in the school and its master, and it never strikes them that their visits are altogether unwelcome; for in nine cases out of ten they come to make some complaint or other. Either you have done, or not done; their children should be in as high a class as somebody else; some bad boy has beaten or stoned their children, and so on through a long list of grievances. Travellers in the book line are a great nuisance. Their impudence and conceit are intolerable. They will often walk into a school, even without knocking, instead of stopping at the door—their

proper place; don't think of taking off their hats, unless politely requested to do so; and usurp the master's place for the time being. They seem to think schoolmasters their proper prey; they have heard a long way off that you are a great reader, and that they confidently expected an order; or, if disappointed, do not scruple to hint that you are not literary.

A good deal of amusement often accompanies the visits of the orange-sellers; though when a rough head pops itself inside the open school door on a summer's afternoon, and demands, "Done ye want any herrins, master?" the amusement is apt to be at the master's expense. I used to trade extensively with an Irishman, who always had a great deal to say in praise of his oranges, and, when all else failed, always vanquished me with "St. Michael's oranges, sir." One day I asked him, "Where was St. Michael's?" He replied, "Sure, master, it's an island belonging to America, on the coast of Spain, near the entrance to the Mediterranean river." "Where did he read that?" "Sure, in the geography books." That Irishman, to my great regret, has disappeared. I have often wondered what has become of him. Is he distributing oranges in some other locality? has he taken a voyage at his country's expense? or is he a general in the Federal army? Such an answer strongly reminds one of Byron's lines:

Spain's an island near
Morocco, betwixt Egypt and Tangier.

But why take the remaining members of this class in order? for they are either beggars or beggars in disguise, and very thin indeed is the disguise of many of these visitors, who stop at the school door. They care nothing for national education, know not of Mr. Lowe and his schemes, care not whether the master be from York or Salley, and are not interested in Standard No. I. But their interest in the master's pocket is great; and if by some pitiful tale they can move him to transfer coins from his pocket to theirs, the object for which they visited him is attained.

We now come to the second and more important class of school-visitors, viz. those who enter the school. That class may be divided thus:

I. Those who are either simply an annoyance or necessary evils;

II. Those whose coming is a matter of indifference;

III. Those who help and encourage.

I presume very few teachers like the inspection of their schools simply for its own sake. Of course they like a good report, and in olden days it was very pleasant to get one's certificate raised. But even that, I imagine, was more on account of pounds, shillings, and pence than for any other reason. Out of (say) one hundred cases, we may safely conclude that ninety-nine teachers only allowed or liked inspection because they gained a certain sum of money by it. Thus it was that the inspector was never really welcome. His visit was naturally associated with extra work, the bother of statistics, and con-

siderable anxiety. If that was the case years ago, how much more so now? The work is harder, the anxiety greatly increased, the result not so satisfactory, the examination being, to a great extent, a lottery. Therefore it is not surprising that we should regard H.M.'s inspector as a necessary evil. The important day comes only too soon and surely. Perhaps the inspector comes before his time, and finds the children in the playground; perhaps after his time, and you must wait; possibly he does not come at all that day, and you get a letter the next morning to say he will come some other day. Then is the time to ask yourself, "Hast any philosophy in thee, shepherd?" Well, but suppose he has come. Is he good tempered? A great deal depends upon that, be assured. Inspectors are but men. The weather, a bad breakfast, or an unfortunate railway journey, affect them even as others. Try to make his first impressions favourable. Have the standards in order, and all the returns ready. Have ink and a quill pen handy, and, above all, be sure that the school secretary asks him "what time the examination will be over, as luncheon will be ready at such a time?" Having done all this, let us hope the fates will be propitious, and that the sun of the inspector's countenance will shine upon you.

Many are the anecdotes of school inspectors. The Rev. A. B. C. was paying his annual visit to a school not a hundred miles from Birmingham. It was some years ago, when geography was much more important than at present. The inspector wished to be told all about the route to India, but the children seemed to know very little about it. At last, in despair, he asked, "Could I go there on a horse?" One little fellow promptly answered, "No, sir." "And why not?" said the inspector. The boy answered, "Please, sir, because you'd tumble off!" Whether or not any more questions were asked on that point report sayeth not. Visitors who come to meet the inspector on an examination-day are generally a great annoyance. They drop in at all hours of the day, and make as great a commotion as possible. Not content with troubling themselves, they often bring their children or their dogs with them. These little ones, of course, with nothing to do, are restless enough, and between them and the boys' love of dogs, and the girls' admiration of the ladies' hats and dresses, the master has a busy time of it. School committees and managers are often disagreeable visitors. They may come too often or not often enough; they may interfere too much or too little; they may take too much or too little upon them. If the school is supported by a lady, she is pretty sure to bother you a good deal; but it is easy to persuade her that all is as she would wish it, and, at the same time, be as much the master of the school as you could desire. One of my friends left Lady Y.'s school; when I asked why, I was told because Lady Y. interfered too much; my answer was, "And why did he not let her interfere?" Many amusing things happen during

these visits. I have heard of one young lady who, to illustrate some point, asked, "What do you call me?" One answers, "A wench," and is called "a horrid boy;" another says, "A young woman," he is "not a bad sort of a boy;" while the third, who says, "A young lady," is "a dear little thing." Punch tells a tale of a boy who, in answer to some question, told an old lady her chain was brass, and who afterwards "stood corrected." Very serious people are apt to be shocked if a little child reads, "and the wedding was furnished with ghosts," instead of, "and the wedding was furnished with guests" (though there is more truth in the rendering than at first sight appears); or instead of reading, "then they remembered the day of old—Moses and his servants," &c., reads it, "then they remembered the days of old Moses." One of my lads one day read, "we will now *eat* (heat) the poker," and was somewhat astonished when the poker was handed to him with the remark, "Now eat it." In a repetition of the Ten Commandments, a boy required prompting for the fourth, and the teacher started him with the word, "Remember;" whereupon he set off at full speed with "Remember, remember, the fifth of November."

Clergymen in too many cases either do too much in a school or too little, and it is difficult to decide which is worse. I shall, however, say but little on this point, merely giving the following little sketch: In the parish of G., the clergyman was a curate fresh from Oxford. As he was fond of children, both duty and inclination often led him into the village school. He was almost always accompanied by three or four dogs, which, of course, the moment he opened the door, rushed frantically into the room, to the youngsters' great delight. They were soon turned out; but anything like order for the time was out of the question. He would, perhaps, give what he called a Scripture lesson, which would consist of a set of the most curious and disjointed questions imaginable. He would go to the back row, put a question or two to them, leaving the rest to do as they liked; then to another part of the class, and so on. If the master did not stand by, the lesson very soon did, for the noise and confusion would be great. Some of them pulled his coat, even stroked his hair, and played all kinds of pranks. Sometimes they would make him angry, but not often. I give one or two of his questions as a sample. "How many foxes did Samson send among the corn of the Philistines?" "Who was Beelzebub?" This question he answered himself by saying, "Queer fellow, wasn't he?" In fact, he mostly answered the questions himself. He wound up by distributing a parcel of nuts or a few oranges. Everybody knew when he was in school by the watching dogs at the door. A common remark of the women of the village was, "Now, he's gone again to make the children laugh." For all this, he was one of the most kind-hearted of men, and had an idea that he did a great deal of work in the school. This,

by the way, is a delusion common enough among school-visitors. The next class of school-visitors are those whose coming is a matter of indifference, who are mostly chance visitors, and rarely enter the school a second time. People who happen to be in the neighbourhood, and have plenty of time to spare—those who read the *Times'* educational leaders, and thereby become possessed of very hazy notions of national education—those who have read Mr. Dickens's delineation of a national school-master, and are anxious to inspect the curiosity (and who, after all, will probably be disappointed)—those who have, or think they have, nothing better to do, and particularly those in quest of a new sensation, form our chance visitors. They are mostly amiable and harmless people, who know no more of what a national school really is than they do of the moon's geography. These are the people who imagine you teach Greek and Latin, who ask questions after the manner of a professor of history, who take notes of the proceedings for future edification, and are either very much pleased or very much disgusted. They often mistake a tall and well-grown pupil-teacher for the master, to the master's manifest discontent, or, at any rate, patronise the biggest pupil-teacher as the senior, which is a still more serious matter. Sometimes one of these visitors turns out to be rather more than you expected. I well remember a queer-looking figure invading the school where I was pupil-teacher. He coolly seated himself on our ink-stained table, put up his glass, swung his legs, and looked about at everything. As I looked at him I thought, "Well, you beat Lord G., and he has about the queerest way of coming into this school of anybody I know." But presently, while still seated on the table, he began to ask a set of the best questions I ever heard any one ask in a school, and we afterwards discovered he was the noble lord, the author of the most amusing book of travels lately published.

Sometimes when too many of these visitors drop in together, they become annoying. If a duke and duchess and a dozen lords and ladies enter together, and the master is not of a very cool nature, he is apt to be a little bothered—particularly if her grace takes upon herself to give a lesson. As a matter of course, the children do badly. I well remember such an occasion when, a small boy of ten, I was in the first class at L. Her Grace of S. asked the question (after hearing us read), "What is an implement?" No doubt several others as well as myself could have answered that question perfectly well; but the awe of the aristocracy was upon us, and we missed that opportunity of covering ourselves with glory. I must do her grace the justice to say that she explained the word clearly. At the same school, a class under the senior pupil-teacher was in the lobby one afternoon. The outer door would not latch, so must be locked; and when locked, it had a great objection to the unlocking process. While so fastened, somebody knocked, and followed up

the knock by attempting to open the door. Of course the pupil-teacher went at once to open the door, but it proved a regular case of "sesame" won't open. The pupil-teacher tried again and again, till the patience of the unknown on the other side of the door was exhausted, and he tried also. This was too much for the teacher; he shouted out in no very mild tone, "Can't you wait a bit? don't be in such a hurry." When at length the door yielded, imagine the discomfiture of our friend, when in walked the Marquis of G., with a broad grin on his face. The poor pupil-teacher was so confused, that he could offer no word of apology, neither was it necessary.

Almost the only fault that can be found with such visitors is that they take up too much time; but they teach this lesson also, that one should never presume on the ignorance or indifference of school visitors. Other people have eyes and ears as well as schoolmasters; and it must not be forgotten that although angel visits are very few and far between, they are none the less real on that account.

We now come to the last class of school-visitors, viz. those who help and encourage.

It would be easy enough to write a good deal on this part of our subject, but not so easy to get schoolmasters to agree as to the kind of people who *do* help and encourage.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

BALLOON ASCENTS.

FRIAR BACON, following the Arab writers in science, believed it possible for man to fly, but the idea remained for centuries as dormant as the wonderful friar's first hint of the steam-engine.

In that restless hopeful age of experiment, the reign of Charles the Second, Bishop Wilkins, the founder of the Royal Society, professed his belief that the time would come when a man would just as naturally call for his wings as for his boots. He revived the flying idea, and struck out some suggestions as to filling the vessel required to float in the clouds with "fire or ethereal air." At the very same time the Jesuit, Francis Luna, proposed to construct a globular copper vessel for the same purpose, which, when exhausted of air, he believed would carry passengers some way towards the moon. In 1709 (Queen Anne), the thought grew a little. A Portuguese friar projected a huge hollow paper or silk bird, that was to be moved by a combination of sails and bellows. The Portuguese king pensioned this ingenious friar handsomely, and gave him a professorship and several hats full of reis, the result of which was that, in 1736, he is said (by means of witchcraft) to have raised a wicker basket covered with paper two hundred feet in the air. In 1766, Dr. Black made several experiments with bags and bladders filled with inflammable air; and in 1782, the Brothers Montgolfier, paper-makers at Annonay in the south of France, after several experiments with bags of

smoke and hot air, filled a silk bag with rarefied air, and publicly at Avignon exhibited its powers of ascension. The secret was found at last. A larger balloon rose six hundred, a third one a thousand, and a fourth six thousand feet. Directly it was proved that a balloon could lift five hundred pounds weight, the idea of its being sustained by men suggested itself to the clever paper-makers. They exhibited a large elliptical balloon before the members of the Academy of Science in a garden in the Faubourg St. Germain, and a larger one still before the king and royal family at Versailles. The first aeronauts were in this balloon, and they consisted of a sheep, a fowl, and a duck.

M. Montgolfier, actuated by the success of these experiments, determined to push them still further. The power of these new ærostatic machines, and their very gradual descent in falling to the ground, had already showed that they were capable of transporting people through the air with all imaginable safety; and this fact was further confirmed by the experiment already mentioned. When M. Montgolfier, therefore, proposed to make a new ærostatic machine, of a firmer and better construction than the former, M. Pilatre de Rozier offered himself to be the first aerial adventurer.

The new air-ship, constructed at Paris, in a garden in the Faubourg St. Antoine, was shaped like a pear, forty-eight feet in diameter and seventy-four in height, and was emblazoned with heraldic and astronomical symbols. The weight of the whole, fire-grate and all, was eighteen hundred pounds. The first ascent was in October, 1783. M. de Rozier was as daring in venturing in the new element as the hero who first put to sea; but he did not care to be in those airy solitudes above the towers of Paris more than nine minutes, and then he safely descended to receive his laurels. In his next ascent, M. Pilatre determined to cut the apron-strings and walk alone. He would have no ropes to keep the balloon moored to the earth. On the 21st of November, 1783, he and the Marquis d'Arlandes, a notoriety-seeking man of quality, made a voyage of five miles in twenty-five minutes, the balloon narrowly escaping destruction by fire.

M. Montgolfier's restless mind soon struck out the idea of filling the balloon with gas, an idea which he in vain attempted to keep secret.

The first experiment was made by two brothers, Messrs. Robert and M. Charles, the latter a professor of experimental philosophy. They caused a gummed lute-string bag, filled with gas, to traverse twenty-five miles in three-quarters of an hour. The two brothers then boldly ascended in a balloon filled with gas, in December, 1783. After a successful journey of twenty-seven miles, Mr. Robert again ascended alone, just after sunset. He rose about ten thousand feet high, came into a cold region of almost colourless clouds, and was driven about by contrary currents.

The next step was to try and discover some means of guiding the still unruly

air-ships. M. Jean Pierre Blanchard, a man of inventive genius, who had for many years been trying to fly by mechanical means, resolved to add wings to the balloon; but in the first attempt he was frustrated by the impetuosity of a young gentleman, who insisted, right or wrong, on ascending along with him. In the scuffle which ensued on this occasion the wings were destroyed.

Messrs. Charles and Robert, who took up this theory, made an ascent in an oblong spheroid balloon, twenty-six feet long. The wings were made in the shape of an umbrella without the handle, to the top of which a stick was fastened parallel to the aperture of the umbrella. Five of these were disposed round the boat, which was near seventeen feet in length. They made a bold flight this time of one hundred and fifty miles, and only descended at last because darkness came on. The average speed was twenty-four miles an hour, and they sensibly concluded that if the wind had been only half as strong, their oars would have given them greater power of guidance. They were at one time in great danger among thunder-clouds.

Ingenuity was next directed to lessen the expense of aeronautic machines by some contrivance to ascend without throwing out ballast, and to descend without losing any of the inflammable air. The first attempt of this kind was made by the Duke de Chartres, who, on the 15th of July, 1784, ascended with the two brothers, Charles and Robert, from the park of St. Cloud. The balloon was of an oblong form, made to ascend with its longest diameter horizontally, and measured fifty-five feet in length and twenty-four in breadth. It contained within it a smaller balloon, filled with common air; by blowing into which common air with a pair of bellows it was supposed that the machine would become sufficiently heavy to descend. By the inflation of the internal bag, the inflammable air in the external one would be condensed into a smaller space, and thus become heavier.

Their voyage proved a failure. The balloon was beaten about by an upper-air whirlwind, and got almost wrecked in an ocean of shapeless clouds. The interior balloon, being cut, fell down and jammed up the aperture of the larger balloon, so that it threatened to burst. In their dire extremity, the Duke of Chartres drew his sword and cut great gashes, seven feet long, in the lower balloon. It then descended safely, but on the very edge of a lake.

The success of the scheme being thus rendered dubious, another method was thought of. This was to put a small ærostatic machine with rarefied air under an inflammable-air balloon, but at such a distance that the inflammable air of the latter might be perfectly out of the reach of the fire used for inflating the former; and thus, by increasing or diminishing the fire in the small machine, the absolute weight of the whole would be considerably diminished or augmented. This scheme was unhappily put in execution by the celebrated M. Pilatre de Rozier, and another gentleman named M. Romaine.

The time had come when the prince of the powers of the air demanded his first victim. When they were three-quarters of a mile from the ground, the two aeronauts were seen through telescopes, busy with the valves, and evidently alarmed. In a moment the balloon caught fire, collapsed, and fell. M. Pilatre seemed to have been dead before he came to the ground; but M. Romaine was alive when some persons came up to the place where he lay, though he expired immediately after.

The first ascent in England was by Vincent Lunardi, an Italian, from the Finsbury Artillery-ground, on the 13th of September, 1784. He used oars or wings, and produced the gas he required by diluted vitriolic acid poured upon zinc. He took up with him a dog, a cat, and a pigeon, and descended at Ware, in Hertfordshire, in two hours and six minutes.

The voyage of Mr. Blanchard and Dr. Jeffries, on the 7th of January, 1785, was a more venturesome one. They ascended from Shakespeare's Cliff, and resolved to cross the Channel. The balloon was so small, they could only carry thirty pounds of ballast. It was a clear frosty morning, and they were able to count thirty-seven villages on the south-east of England. After passing several vessels, they found the balloon determined to descend. They then threw out, bit by bit, all their ballast; next, a parcel of books, one by one; then, the wings of their boat, their provisions, their anchor, their cords, and even their clothes. Lastly, like brave resolute men as they were, they determined to sling themselves to the air-globe, and cut away the car. Just then, however, the capricious thing took to ascending, and rising over the high lands between Cape Blanc and Calais, descended safely in an avenue of the Forest of Guînes, where a monument still marks the spot.

In 1785, a Mr. Crosbie attempted to ascend in Dublin. On his stepping out of the car, a Mr. M'Guire, a reckless college youth, sprang into it, and the balloon ascended with him, to the astonishment of the beholders, and presently was carried with great velocity towards the Channel. This being observed, a crowd of horsemen pursued full speed the course he seemed to take, and could plainly perceive the balloon descending into the sea. Lord H. Fitzgerald, who was amongst the foremost, instantly despatched a swift sailing vessel mounted with oars, and all the boats that could be got, to the relief of the rash youth, whom they found almost spent with swimming, just time enough to save his life.

On the 19th of July of the same year, Mr. Crosbie again ascended at Dublin, determining to cross the Channel to Holyhead. His car was a wicker basket, to the upper edge of which he had tied bladders, to serve as life-buoys. The current of air bore him towards Whitehaven; and forty miles from Ireland he could see both shores. The cold became so great, that his ink froze, and his mercury sank into the bulb. He became sick, and, entering

a region of storm and thunder and lightning, the balloon sank to the surface of the water. He soon found that the water in the car served as ballast, and that the bladders kept it afloat, so he put on his cork jacket, and made himself snug. The balloon maintaining its poise, it became a powerful sail, by means of which, and a snatch-block to his car, he went before the wind as regularly as in a sailing vessel. In this situation he became hungry, and ate a little fowl. Finding he outstripped all the vessels pursuing him, he drew in the balloon, and was finally overtaken and rescued by a barque from Dunleary.

Only a few days afterwards, Major Money, having ascended from Norwich, fell into somewhat similar but far greater danger. The valve of the balloon being too small, and the major being unable to descend in time, the balloon was blown out to sea, where he floated for several hours. He was just sinking, when, near midnight, a revenue cutter picked him up, almost exhausted. There was a fine mezzotint drawing of this adventure published at the time.

In August of this year Mr. Blanchard made his first trial of a parachute, to be used in case of accident. With this he let a dog fall safely to the ground from a great height.

In September, 1785, a Mr. Baldwin ascended from Chester, and left on record his observations, which are rather fuller than those of his predecessors. The perspective appearance of things to him was very remarkable. The lowest bed of vapour that first appeared as a cloud was pure white in detached fleeces, increasing as they rose; they presently coalesced, and formed, as he expresses it, a sea of cotton, tufting here and there by the action of the air in the undisturbed part of the clouds. The whole became an extended white floor of cloud, the upper surface being smooth and even. Above this white floor he observed, at great and unequal distances, a vast assemblage of thunder-clouds, each parcel consisting of whole acres in the densest form; he compares their form and appearance to the smoke of pieces of ordnance, which had consolidated into masses of snow, and penetrated through the upper surface or white floor of common clouds, there remaining visible and at rest. Through a well-like opening in the white floor of clouds, at four miles high, he saw the town of Chester and two miles of surrounding landscape. The shadow of the balloon in the clouds had an iris circle round it.

On November the 25th, Mr. Lunardi ascended at Glasgow, and in two hours he passed over a track of one hundred and twenty-five miles. Being overcome with drowsiness, he slept for about twenty minutes in the bottom of the car during his voyage. In the same year, Blanchard made several experiments with explosive and other parachutes, and in all cases the dogs in them reached the ground in safety.

In June, 1802, M. Garnerin and a Captain Sowden made a remarkable ascent from Ranelagh Gardens during a heavy gale. At fifteen

thousand (?) feet high he could hear the rattling of the carriages on the roads, the lowing of cattle, and the huzzas of the people, though at the same time it was with difficulty that he and M. Garnerin could hear themselves speak. In this situation, Epping Forest appeared to them not larger than a gooseberry-bush. In three-quarters of an hour the balloon drove sixty miles, and the descent, a very dangerous one, was made on Fingering Hoe, a common beyond Colchester. The country people there were so frightened at the balloon, that they offered to fire at the bruised and drenched aeronauts. On their way towards Colchester they were shouted at as impostors, and at Colchester itself the landlord, seeing their sailors' dress and signal-flags, would insist on their being election agents, and declared that he should reserve his vote.

In July, 1802, M. Garnerin made another ascent from Lord's Cricket Ground, in company with Mr. H. Locker, afterwards deputy-governor of Greenwich Hospital. The Prince of Wales was on the ground, with the Duchess of Devonshire on one arm and Lady Morpeth on the other, attended by a train of noblemen and people of fashion. The wind was very boisterous and threatening. The balloon descended at Chingford-green, in Essex, having made exactly nine miles in one quarter of an hour.

M. Garnerin was the son of a Parisian pewterer. A student at the university during the height of the Montgolfier mania, he devoted his whole time, in spite of the vexation of the professors, to experiments with small balloons, and was eventually expelled the college. When the Revolution broke out, he became a volunteer in the Parisian National Guard, devoting his spare time to flights in the air. Not having money sufficient to purchase a balloon himself, he applied to a rich and avaricious person, who bought one for him, and gave him a mere trifle for ascending in it, on condition that he should receive the cash which the public were to pay for admission. His parents, however, learning that he was on the eve of going up in a balloon, waited on General La Fayette, who was commander-in-chief of the Parisian Guard, and begged he would interpose his military authority, and not suffer the giddy youth to ascend. M. La Fayette sent a file of soldiers to put the young adventurer in confinement; but Garnerin saw the men approach, and guessing what had been their orders, immediately drew his sabre, threatened to run the first person through who should interrupt him, cut the cords which kept the balloon to the ground, and ascended with the utmost velocity.

In Robespierre's time, Garnerin was sent as commissioner to the army of the North, then commanded by General Ransonnet. Taken prisoner in Flanders by the Duke of York's division, Garnerin was sent to Oudenarde. Thence the Austrians carried him to Hungary, where he was eventually exchanged. Whether or not

it was Garnerin who conducted the balloon reconnoitres before some of the battles between the republican troops and the Austrians, we do not know.

Meanwhile, Mr. Wise made a still more memorable ascent in July, 1835, from Lebanon, in Pennsylvania. He says: "At three o'clock I left the earth with a breeze from the north-west. In a few minutes, after a panoramic view of innumerable villages, with the broad dazzling sheet of water of the Susquehanna unfolding to the view, I crossed the Reading and Harrisburg turnpike at the first gate below the town; and although I started off with an ascending power that raised me more swiftly, there was the horizontal velocity of the wind. I was induced to part with a bag of sand of about six pounds weight, as a proffer to the toll-gate keeper, who very humorously hailed me to pay toll as I passed over his gate. This caused the balloon to rise with amazing rapidity, rushing up through the strong horizontal wind, which was blowing with a speed of at least thirty miles per hour, like a fiery charger dashing along in mettled pride, heeding no restraint. This soon brought me in contact with a thick hazy mist, which was entered and in a few moments passed. Above this were a clear sky and a brilliant sunshine; but it was now so cold that my hands became numbed, and a painful ear-ache seized me. The balloon was still ascending rapidly, and my next impulse was to discharge gas and to descend into a more congenial climate; but in this I was foiled, and up boomed the buoyant courser with unabated career. The cord with which the valve was worked was sufficiently strong to perform that office; but no allowance was made in its appropriation to unforeseen necessities. Having now got far above the mist, and not less than three miles above the earth, in a temperature of forty-three degrees, having been within twenty-five minutes transferred from a warmth of seventy-four degrees, which the thermometer indicated when I left the earth, the world below scarcely visible from the intervening discoloured structure of air, my ears buzzing like a beehive, which for a while I took to be a commotion of the gas in the balloon trying to escape through its tightly distended envelope, the valve-rope broken inside the machine, the aerial ship still bounding and gyrating upwards, I felt a degree of excitement which can be better imagined than described. Having no way to let off gas—even the lower orifice of the balloon containing the waste-pipe, which answers for a safety-valve when properly rigged, was doubled up between the concentrating hoop and the lower side of the balloon, which was now swollen to its utmost tension—I endeavoured to reach the lower part of the balloon with a knife; but, by straddling across with my feet in the open work of the basket, it could not be so reached. From the hissing noise of the gas, which was making its way through the small channels of the compressed neck of the balloon, I knew that something must give way soon.

I was apprehensive that it *might* be my last voyage." (Is it not strange that this should have been written after the death of M. Rozier?) "In another moment, a report like that of suddenly bursting an inflated bag, such as boys frequently amuse themselves with, informed us that the balloon had rent; and at the same time some of the cords—two of them—separated from the concentrating hoop; and that side of the balloon at which this took place as quickly bulged out, and immediately the atmosphere round the machine got filled with a whitish filmy vapour. This was a consequence of a mixture of warm hydrogen with cold atmosphere. Although the breaking of two cords next to each other, out of the twenty-four (which was the number in this machine), did not seem to endanger my situation much, but seemed rather to have relieved me to some extent from the very perilous position in which I had been a few moments previously, it still destroyed that mathematical strength existing in its complete state, which made me feel anxious to return to terra firma. I looked at my watch, and found the time to be five minutes past four: After the explosion of the lower part of the balloon, it commenced a tolerably rapid descent; and as the atmosphere had got considerably clearer than it had been when I started, I could more easily distinguish the face of the country beneath. On observation, I found the balloon was gradually descending on the village of Womelsdorf. Here I received a salute from a volley of musketry, by a company of volunteers who were celebrating the national republican birthday at that place. Although I had determined to let the balloon sink to the ground as soon as it possibly would from its own gravitation, occasioned by the loss of the gas through the rent—for I had no control of the valve—this salute of firing and shouting inspired me to rise again; and accordingly papers and ballast were thrown overboard, sufficient to send the machine up at least two miles high. No sooner was this height attained than it again commenced to descend very gradually, which brought me to the earth about four miles west of Reading. Here an incident occurred which was as amusing to me as it was terrifying to the individual who was a party thereto. Being likely to descend in a cluster of trees, I threw out some ballast to cross them; at the same time the grappling-hook took hold in a branch of one of the trees, which was broken off, and dragged along. At this moment I perceived a countryman mounting the top rail of a worm-fence about a hundred paces ahead of the balloon, to which point the wind was driving it. I hailed him to assist, for the balloon was floating the length of the grappling-rope above, and dragging the broken limb of the tree below. He looked in every direction but upwards, and in another moment the limb and grapple came square up against the panel of fence upon which he was sitting, and threw it down, pitching the man head-foremost into the meadow

before him, from which he sprang terror-stricken—if fleetness of feet is any evidence of such feeling; for he was soon out of sight, leaving me to manage the best way I could, which was by being drawn up against a wood. Here I got the assistance of two women who had been working in a hay-field. Had it not been for these Amazonian ladies, I should inevitably have gotten into the wood, for a brisk gale was just passing over at the time."

One of the most notable balloon ascents ever made in England was that of Mr. Green's Great Nassau, that succeeded in reaching Germany after one of almost the longest aerial voyages that had then been made. The expedition was fitted out by Mr. Robert Holland, an enthusiast in aërostation. The object was to make a trip on a grand scale, and thoroughly to test the powers of one of the largest balloons that had yet been exhibited. The air-ship, built in the strongest manner, was sixty feet high, contained eighty-five thousand cubic feet of gas, and was calculated to support a weight of many hundred pounds. The wicker car was nine feet long and four broad. The car contained a windlass for raising and lowering the guide-rope, and the bottom of the car was cushioned, so that the aeronauts might have a sleeping-place, if necessary.

The ascent took place on the 7th of November, 1836. Very few persons were admitted inside Vauxhall Gardens; but outside thousands were crowded, eager to watch the soaring of the monster. Mr. Green had provided a fortnight's provisions, and a ton of ballast arranged in bags. All round the hoops were hung cloaks, carpet-bags, barometers, cordage, wine-jars, spirit flasks, barrels of wood and copper, speaking-trumpets, telescopes, and lamps. They also took to the upper regions a coffee-machine, the heat in which was evolved from slaking quicklime. The aeronauts also carried with them a letter of introduction to the King of Holland, and special passports for all parts of the Continent.

At half-past one the mooring ropes were let go, and the air-ship slowly drifted away to the south-east, across the hop-fields of Kent, over Bromley and Footsray. The day was cold and fine, and the few light clouds that there were served to point out the different currents at different altitudes. At forty-eight minutes past two they crossed the Medway, and an hour after they caught sight of the stately towers of Canterbury. Here Mr. Green dropped a parachute, with a letter for the mayor, who had been a patron of his. A few minutes after they came in sight of the sea, red with the setting sun; and as evening grew on the balloon descended so near the earth, that the navigators could carry on a flying conversation with persons over whom they passed. A covey of partridges fled at their approach, and a colony of rooks scattered before them in noisy dismay.

As night approached, dark and without moon, fires seemed to break out of the earth, massing here and there where there were villages, towns,

or cities—lurid fires, that at first seemed like prairies in flame, but gradually, as the balloon drew nearer, assumed positive forms, mapped out into square, and shot out into long lines of streets. In the dark night, rapidly losing sight of all landmarks, the *aéronauts* floated on, they knew not whither. Liège, with its blazing ironworks, seems to have been almost the only city they could recognise. Just outside this city, Mr. Green, in hauling in his guide-line, lest it should entangle itself with a factory chimney or a church steeple, dropped from the car his coffee-pot, and this was the only serious accident he met with in his whole journey. Having no longer use for the lime he had brought, he let the barrel fall, with a parachute attached to it. Hearing voices from some of the works outside Liège, Mr. Green lowered a Bengal light, and shouted to the people below in French and German through a speaking-trumpet, to their horror and confusion. Hearing a steam-engine below, Mr. Green raised the guide-rope again, and let fall some sand ballast among the alarmed crowd. The fiery globe then passed away into the outer darkness from the crowd's astonished gaze. It was now past midnight, and even the baying of the watch-dogs had ceased. The stars looked larger than on earth, and occasional flashes of lightning lit the sky to the north. The light at times lowered from the car seemed to melt its way through a sea of blackness. One of the voyagers describes the effect to be as if the balloon was cleaving its way through black marble, which slowly softened before its orb. Mr. Mason, in his inflated book, says the altitude of the barometric column would manifest a change of several thousand feet in the level of the balloon's course, while the guide-rope, continuing to trail upon the ground, would indicate an uniform distance from the surface of somewhat less than its own extreme dimensions. "Several times, under the influence of these changes, did we arrive so near the earth as to be enabled to distinguish, imperfectly, it is true, some of its most prominent features, and, as the intensity of the darkness yielded to our approach, obtain some faint idea of the nature of the country which lay beneath us. At these times we appeared to be traversing large tracts of country, partially covered with snow, diversified by forests, and intersected occasionally with rivers, of which the Meuse in the earlier part of the night, and the Rhine towards the conclusion, constituted, as we afterwards learned, the principal objects both of our admiration and of our conjectures."

At about half-past three in the morning, when the balloon was about twelve thousand feet from the earth, three sudden explosions and a great agitation of the car struck terror to the voyagers, who, however, soon discovered it was only the gores of silk expanding in a higher atmosphere. The cold was at this time intense, for the water and coffee were frozen. The *aéronauts* themselves, however, did not suffer, for the cold was not a damp cold. As day broke, the stars lost their intense brilliancy, and the

morning star alone retained its resplendence. Large flocks of fleecy clouds spread below. The rushing noise, as of the sea or of vast forests, which they had heard all night, ceased, and an irregular surface of dimly-lit cultivated country appeared, traversed by a vast river. The sun rose, lighting up a circle whose diameter was three hundred miles in length. Three times they rose to see the sun rise, and three times they descended again into the lower unit darkness. Fearing now, by the vast track of snow, that they were approaching Poland, Mr. Green got ready the grapnel, drew in the guide-rope, and prepared to descend. Mr. Mason says:

"As the mists of the night began to clear away from the surface of the soil, we were delighted to perceive a country intersected with roads, dotted with villages, and enlivened with all the signs of an abundant and industrious population. The snowy covering, which so lately chilled us with its forbidding aspect, had now disappeared, except a few patches which still lingered in the crevices, or lay spread within the sheltered recesses of the numerous hills, by which the surrounding neighbourhood was particularly distinguished. On the summit of one of these an isolated edifice of considerable magnitude and venerable antiquity appeared."

The place selected for the descent was a grassy vale between two wooded hills. In every direction spread forests. The difficulty was to release the frozen sand from the bags. There was danger, for a wooded precipice was all but touching the balloon. When Mr. Green and his friend heaved out a solid frozen ballast-bag of fifty-six pounds weight, the balloon, clearing the mountain at a bound, rose a thousand feet into the air. The gas was then released, and the balloon descended close to the forest, the grapnel catching at the branches. Then Mr. Green pulled the valve full open, and descended just outside the wood, after a voyage of eighteen hours. They had descended near Weilburg, in Nassau.

These are a few of the more memorable balloon ascents. We have no room to give in detail Mr. Blanchard's or Mr. Cocking's death, and many other disastrous occurrences.

It must be confessed that the new science has as yet led but to small results. Even in 1785, Mr. Blanchard performed an aerial voyage from Lille of three hundred miles. Nearer our own time, Mr. Wise and others have traversed one thousand one hundred miles of air; but the danger of voyages in vessels that will obey no helm, and are exposed to storms more terrible than those of earth, still continues. Yet it would be unworthy any thoughtful man, who opposes finality, to deride the horrible future of a new and undeveloped idea. Even now balloons could be used to explore otherwise inaccessible mountains and seas; they could reconnoitre military positions, or drop lighted shells into besieged towns; they could carry ropes over wrecked vessels, or convey intelligence into beleaguered places; above all, they

are useful, and have been largely used by Mr. Glashier for recording changes of temperature at different elevations, the action of the barometer, the propagation of sound, and the laws of storms. The philosopher, a mile above the earth, is on a new platform, highly adapted for meteorological observations.

MABEL'S PROGRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

CHAPTER XI. CONCLUSION.

Two years later the village of Hazlehurst, near Hammerham, was full of excitement early on a bright October morning; and the not very musical bells of the little parish church were doing their best to inform the world, with their tinkling old voices, that a man and woman had then and there been joined together in holy wedlock. It was not a grand wedding, nor even a gay one; but the sun has seldom shone on a bride whose face reflected more quiet happiness and trusting love than did Mabel Earnshaw's, as she stood by Clement's side before the mild old clergyman (Dooley's friend), and repeated after him the solemn words that made her a wife. Yes; they were married. After the death of little Corda—long wept and always lovingly remembered—Clement and Mabel had spoken solemnly together of their future. The sympathy which had united them by the child's dying bed, had served to show them how entirely they were one in heart, and how strong was the affection that bound them together. In the passing away of that pure spirit, and the last links that tied it to earth, they had recognised the omnipotence of love, and had acknowledged that without it the world and all that it can give is but dust and ashes. Clement did not swerve from the plain duty that lay before him—the duty of providing a home for his mother and sister. And Mabel, on her part, had no thought of sacrificing those who were dependent on her exertions. "But," said Clement, "we can each work better and more cheerfully, my dearest, when we know that we belong to each other by a solemn engagement."

"Ah, Clement," Mabel made answer, "you are good, and strong, and wise. How much wiser and stronger than the undisciplined girl who once rejected your proffered love, from the promptings of a foolish pride!"

By which it may be seen that our heroine, in her progress, had learnt some good lessons.

They had made up their minds to wait for years—to wait until Clement's prospects were clear and unencumbered, but an unexpected circumstance had enabled them to marry sooner than they had dared to hope. Mr. M'Culloch proposed to Penelope Charlewood. The old Scotchman had become a frequent visitor at De Montfort Villas, and had observed very shrewdly that the neatness, order, and economy which reigned there were mainly owing to Penny's thrift and energy. Mrs. Charlewood,

after Walter's departure—he sailed for Rio Janeiro with a letter for Stephens's brother in his pocket, and many solemn promises of amendment on his lips—sank into a state of almost childishness. Her health was good, and her body still active; but her memory deserted her almost entirely, and the only two things in which she took an interest were, first, a letter from her absent boy, and, secondly, the condition of the street-door lock, which she insisted on keeping oiled and cleaned with her own hands.

Mr. M'Culloch, pleased and amused, in the first instance, by Penny's keen repartees and sharp sayings, gradually conceived a great respect and regard for the notable, self-sacrificing, brave woman who was the wise and successful ruler of a little territory, the absolute conditions of whose government were economy, industry, and forethought. How the idea of removing Penny's administrative talents to a wider and less hard-working sphere of action gradually entered into his head it boots not here to tell. But certain it is that he astonished everybody very greatly one fine day, by soberly and deliberately asking Penelope Charlewood to be his wife, and that she still more astonished everybody by accepting him!

"I have bargained that mamma shall always have a home with us, Clem," said Penelope, imparting the unexpected tidings to her brother, with an assumption of great coolness and unconcern, "and so you will be free to—to do as you like, and to find your own happiness, Clem, when I am no longer a millstone round your neck, my poor boy; and I hope, Clem dear, that you may be as happy as you deserve to be; and I would wish you a better wish if I knew how, but I don't know how. Dear, good, kind, brave, darling Clem!"

Here Penny's self-possession forsook her, and she clung, sobbing, round her brother's neck.

"My dear, dear sister," he said, embracing her, "I trust you do not consent to this marriage from any consideration such as you hint at. You are no millstone round my neck, Penny, nor have you ever been anything but my dear, helpful fellow-worker. After these years of loving and living together, I could not bear to resign you to any but a better care and protection than my own can be."

"Clem, I'm very, very fond of you; but whilst charring and plain sewing are open professions in the land, I shouldn't think of marrying a man I didn't care for, even to oblige you. No; the fact is, I have a great regard for Donald—who is, I need not tell you, a thoroughly good fellow, Clem—but I would not have left you to marry the best man that ever trod, if I had not plainly seen that—that there was one nearer and dearer ready to take my vacant place dear."

So it came to pass, that Penelope Charlewood became Mrs. Donald M'Culloch, of the Hawthorns, Hightate. And it may here be stated that the marriage proved in all respects a happy and well-assorted one. If Mrs. M'Culloch's nimble tongue occasionally outran the limits of

good humour and discretion in its fondness for sarcastic sayings, her husband merely smiled placidly, and patting her hand—gradually restored to something like its former plump whiteness,—observed quietly :

"Hoot, hoot, Penny, woman! We know better. You're the best-hearted creature betwixt the Land's End and John o' Groats. Yer bark's a deal worse than yer bite, my lassie!"

Within six months after his marriage, Mr. McCulloch offered his brother-in-law a share in the business, and the style and title of the firm became thenceforward McCulloch and Charlewood. Clement was thus enabled to offer Mabel a home, not rich or elegant, but comfortable, and above the reach of want. Mrs. Saxelby was installed again in the old cottage at Hazlehurst, newly decorated, and somewhat enlarged, and was able to keep another servant besides the faithful Betty, who remained with her in the nominal capacity of parlour-maid, but who gradually assumed the position towards her mistress that a prime minister assumes towards a constitutional sovereign. Betty—who enjoyed the immense advantage of being responsible to no parliament—made the laws, and Mrs. Saxelby, with a good deal of pomp and circumstance, endorsed them. And as Mrs. Saxelby extremely disliked the trouble of active government, and Betty much enjoyed it, maid and mistress jogged on together in the most amicable fashion possible. Dooley, now grown strong, and arrived at that glorious stage in life's march when knickerbockers are a part of the daily costume, lived and throve, and was already looking forward to the time when he should be entered at the Hammerham Grammar School, and become a great scholar, and get an exhibition and go to college. All which duly befel. And it has been whispered to me lately, that as soon as Julian Saxelby, Esq., is called to the bar, a marriage may be expected to take place between him and the bright-eyed, flaxen-haired Jeanie, only daughter of Donald McCulloch, Esq., of the Hawthorns, Highgate, and Penelope his wife.

Augusta was so much offended at her sister's marriage "to a tradesman," as she said with just indignation, and so piously shocked at Clement's engagement to a person who had not only performed on a public stage, but who (as Augusta had been able to ascertain on good authority) absolutely had devoted nearly the whole of the money so earned to her own family, instead of bringing it as a marriage-portion to her husband, which was a piece of cold-hearted iniquity altogether unforgivable, that she declined to hold any further communication with those degenerate scions of the house of Charlewood. Except—it is well to be just—in so far as sending them a large bundle, per book post, of her husband's sermons, printed, by subscription, on highly glazed cream-coloured paper, and intended for private circulation only. Geraldine O'Brien was abroad with Lady Popham at the time of Mabel's marriage, but she wrote the latter a warm-hearted letter, full of

good wishes, adding to them Lady Popham's kindest remembrances. "Godmamma is wonderfully well," she wrote, "and has, I think, quite got over the shock of the handsome Alfred's bad behaviour. She has found a new protégé—a Tyrolese who plays the guitar, and who fills our apartment here in Vienna with a kind of tinkling hum, like fifty thousand musical grasshoppers made of fine steel! I say nothing of the clouds he puffs from his meerschau, nor of the odours of garlic which hang around him perennially. However, he is a harmless creature, and strums away peacefully without hurting any one." At the close of the letter came a little postscript—"for Mabel alone." "You are a fortunate woman, and have got the best man in the world. Make much of him, and be very happy. The latter wish is not the less sincerely uttered that I was once a little—just the 'laste taste in loife,' as they say at Kilclare—in love with your husband. But he?—ah no; be quite easy. I know now, and I suspected then, that there was one little slip of a girl who stood between him and all other women. He loved you always, truly and faithfully. Be grateful to him, and think sometimes of your sincere friend, G. O'B."

Mr. Alaric Allen was dreadfully disgusted by Mabel's announcement that she intended to leave his theatre, and the stage altogether, at the close of her second London season.

"It is too bad," he said, confidentially, to some friends, "altogether too bad! A girl who had the ball at her foot, a girl who might have made the greatest reputation—ay, and the greatest fortune—of any actress since Fanny Kemble, to throw it all away in this manner! And she is not even making a good marriage, as I hear. Some trading fellow or other, whom she knew in her early youth at Hammerham. A wretched business. But that is the worst of women, as I often say. The cleverest of them—and this girl is very clever, in fact is, in certain things, an undoubted genius—but the very cleverest of them are such fools!"

Of the rest of the personages whose lives were more or less involved with Mabel's, or who had any influence on her career, there remains not much to say. Mr. Trescott, utterly lost and wretched after his child's death, became a confirmed drunkard, and sank lower and lower, until at length he was almost totally unfitted for the exercise of his profession, and became a pensioner on the bounty of a few persons, who were kind to him for little Corda's sake. Among these, Jerry Shaw was to be counted. The queer old man gave out of his poverty to the wretched drunkard, who came, with tearful eyes and quivering voice, to talk to him by the hour of his "lost angel." And many were the serious harangues with which Jerry favoured Lingo on the evils of drunkenness; harangues to which Lingo appeared to listen with an argumentative, unconvinced air, one eye blinking slyly, as who should say, "It's all very well; I let you go on for the present, but I mean to pose you by-and-by!"

Another shock awaited Mrs. Malachi Dawson in connexion with old Mr. Shaw, a personage, one would have said, unlikely enough to cross her path in any way. The aged relative, from whom the Reverend Malachi Dawson was to inherit considerable estates in Ireland, died in the fulness of time, and in his last will and testament there was a bequest of a modest annuity to his second cousin and former friend, Gerald O'Shaughnessy, "whom I believe to be still living," so ran the will, "and whose forgiveness I hereby beg for an injury I did him in our youth." And when inquiries were made for the said Gerald O'Shaughnessy, in order to carry out the last desire of the testator, behold, whom should he prove to be but old Jerry Shaw, the strolling player! He had run away from his home, when quite a lad, in a fit of despair and jealousy at the falsehood of his lady-love, whose affections had been beguiled from him by the second cousin, now deceased. He had joined a troop of wandering comedians under a feigned name, and had purposely concealed all trace of himself from his friends and family. Wounded feeling, at first, and a stubborn proud independence that belonged to his character, afterwards, had kept him aloof from all who had known him in former days. And by degrees his nearest relatives died off (his mother had died in his childhood), and he remained without kindred in the world, save his former rival, himself a widowed, childless old man. But, nevertheless, the shabby, hatchet-faced old actor known as Jerry Shaw, proved himself to be, beyond a doubt, Gerald O'Shaughnessy, third son of the late Patrick O'Shaughnessy, Esq., of Castle Belford, in Ireland. And consequently he was a relative of the deceased gentleman, and consequently—it was too dreadful, such people ought to be sent to the treadmill, Augusta declared—a distant kinsman of the Reverend Malachi Dawson himself! Jerry, however, showed no disposition to call cousins with any one. He received his yearly income quietly, and remained in obscurity as before. He did not even cease to perform in public, saying that he was used to the theatre now, and should miss it; but he departed from beneath Mr. Hutchins's roof, and removed to a neat lodging near to a suburban cemetery, wherein he caused to be erected an unpretending monument over a little grave, with a broken lily carved in marble for its only ornament.

Miss Fluke, after presiding impressively at the weddings of two or three of her younger sisters, began to grow discontented and uneasy at home, and finally—the departure from England of some friends of hers favouring the project—she resolved to emigrate to Australia. Thence she wrote immensely long letters home to all her friends, which letters were most frequently overweight, and necessitated the payment of double postage. The vast extent of that new land appeared to afford scope for the fullest development of Miss Fluke's remarkable energies. She visited several of the gold-diggings, and distri-

buted tracts to the heterogeneous population which was to be found there. One of her chief converts was a Chinese, about the hopefulness of whose spiritual condition Miss Fluke wrote quires of pious rapture. But, suddenly, all mention of this interesting individual ceased, and it afterwards appeared, on Miss Fluke's own solemn testimony, that her Celestial protégé had decamped one night, no one knew whither, bearing with him his instructress's gold watch, doubtless as a memento of her teaching. Mrs. Malachi Dawson was the fortunate recipient of a great deal of Miss Fluke's epistolary eloquence, but as the correspondence on her side was by no means kept up with similar vigour, it languished by degrees, and at last died a natural death. The last letter which Augusta received from her friend was chiefly remarkable for a novel and striking division of mankind into four classes. There had been a conflagration in some new settlement where Miss Fluke was temporarily residing, and in describing the efforts of the inhabitants to subdue the fire, she wrote: "I must bear witness to the very great zeal and energy displayed by our dear flock. Every one laboured with edifying eagerness. Men, women, children, and missionaries, all exerted themselves to the utmost."

At the latest accounts, Miss Fluke was Miss Fluke still.

Alfred Trescott had disappeared from London after his sister's death, and for a long time no clue to his whereabouts was discovered. But one autumn, five or six years after their marriage, when Clement and Mabel were staying for a while at a much-frequented German watering-place, they had a strange glimpse of him. It happened thus. The children—Doo-ley was now an uncle, and made one of the family party on their holiday tour, as did also Mrs. Saxelby—had been sent home to bed, and Clement and his wife were sauntering arm in arm together through the trim alleys, enjoying the twilight sweetness of the air, when a figure, coming from behind them, brushed close to Mabel, and flitted swiftly onward through the dusk. Mabel started violently, and clung to her husband's arm.

"What is the matter, love?" he asked; "what has alarmed you?"

"Dear Clement, that was Alfred Trescott who went by us just now! He or his ghost, I am certain of it."

"Probably himself in the flesh, then, Mabel. But how can you be sure? It is so dark, and you scarcely caught a glimpse of the man's face."

"No; but yet I am sure it was he. There was something in the gait, in the turn of the head, that I recognised instantly. He went towards the gaming-tables. Let us follow, Clement, and convince ourselves."

They entered the brilliantly lighted rooms, where around the green tables the same old crowd of faces, so well known, and so often described, were intent on their game. For a time they saw no one at all resembling Alfred,

but presently a long thin hand was thrust out from behind some one in the front rank, and laid down a trifling stake. Mabel silently pressed her husband's arm, admonishing him to watch, and in another moment they saw rise up over the shoulder of a smiling florid German burgher a face that seemed like one looming up out of those depths, the entrance to which bore the terrible inscription, "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here!" It was a face almost perfect in the harmonious beauty of its outline, but covered with a death-like pallor, and so thin that the jaw and the cheek-bones were sharply defined beneath the skin. The large dark eyes glittered restlessly in their hollow sockets, and the straight black brows above them were permanently contracted, as though with ceaseless pain. It was a dreadful face—dreadful in its baggared youth, dreadful in the settled malignity of its expression. Mabel shuddered and shrank back; but Alfred did not see her, neither did the rest take any heed of him. They were all too much absorbed in the changes of the game to pay any attention to each other.

"Let us get away from this place," whispered Mabel; "I feel as though I could not breathe here."

They walked home together almost in silence. Mabel was trembling greatly, and the tears were in her eyes. Clement made inquiries of the people about the place whether they knew or had ever seen such a person as he described. Oh yes, they had seen him; knew him quite well. He was often there. Did not stay there always. They thought he went to other gambling-places when he left theirs. He was a desperate and inveterate gamester. Poor? Yes, he was poor. It was not exactly the way to grow rich to play as he played. He was an artist—a violinist. He sometimes boasted that he had been a great famous player once in England, but who could tell? He was quite young still, and great artists were not made in a day. Still it was certain that he could play well yet, when he chose. Sometimes, when he was absolutely penniless, he would obtain permission to play in the public room of some hotel, and he always got money. Once they had offered him an engagement in the local band. He accepted for a time, but he could not keep the situation. He was terribly fierce and wild sometimes, almost mad, they thought, and nothing could keep him from the green table. Every farthing that he could get went there. They supposed he would put a pistol to his head some day. Herr Gott! Such things *had* happened. Clement, returning to his wife

with this news, found her weeping and still greatly agitated.

"My dearest," he said, "do not let this distress you so much. It is sad, it is terrible. But, after all, I do not suppose that any one could have predicted a brighter ending to such a career as this wretched young man's."

"No, no, dear Clement, it is not that. But when I think of all that that sweet, loving little heart suffered, of how she clung to him, and hoped for him, and loved him to the last! Ah, Corda, poor, patient, gentle little Corda!"

He soothed her, and held her fondly in his arms, and by-and-by they sat calmly, looking out on to the silver moonlight edging the black masses of foliage beneath their window.

"Do you remember, Clement," said Mabel, leaning her head upon her husband's shoulder—"do you remember when that dear little one was dying, and held our hands clasped together in her own, how she prophesied that we should one day be married to each other, and should think of little Corda, and be glad to know that we had been kind to her, and that she—poor darling—had been very grateful?"

"Yes; and, my Mabel, she said another truth—that we should be happy, because we loved each other."

"I remember her very words. 'I think nothing is so happy as really loving,' she said; 'nothing is so happy as really loving.'"

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THE DEAR GIRL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BELLA DONNA," "NEVER FORGOTTEN," &c.

CHAPTER IX. THE NEW ARRIVAL.

MR. BLACKER'S private trumpeting on behalf of his new friends—the captain coarsely called it "touting"—had been attended with such success, that when the hour for Prado drew near and the packet was not an hour off, the Port had become unnaturally crowded, and then a buzz and hum of voices to this tune and key: "Have you seen them? Rolling in gold. The nicest people in the world. Very highly connected. Going to spend a long time here." Presently, those passing and repassing, four and three abreast, were excited by knowing that the moment had come. Mr. Blacker appeared in charge of a party—new faces, new figures, new dresses; waving, and flourishing, and pointing, and declaiming. He was in great spirits, radiant with pride and proprietorship. Curiosity in the community was always allowed to gratify itself without regard to restraint. Every one might rush, crowd, or stare as eagerly as they pleased. Voices were not lowered, and the strangers heard distinctly as they passed by, "There they are! Those are they!" They walked on with the indifference of perfect good breeding, perhaps a little amused and smiling, as all "nice" well-bred people are. The tall and "prince-like" Mr. Guernsey Beaufort and his brother Ernest—two about as fine and elegant men as had ever appeared at Dieppe—attracted all eyes; and the scorn and contempt with which the latter looked round on every one and everything showed the true club man and man of fashion, and was the real guarantee for their elegance and respectability. Mrs. Beaufort, too,—a pale graceful woman, with a shawl draped about her—swept along on her husband's arm, looking gently about, and the ladies of the colony felt with an instinct that here was a secret reserve—the reserve of true breeding—which would keep them at a distance. She had her little girl—a charming, elegant, well brought up little thing—walking beside her.

"You see them all now," said Mr. Blacker, flourishing and doing the panorama-describer's part. "Of course this is the public ground," he added,

to them, apologising for the mixture, "and it is not considered anything, meeting in this way; and of course it leads to nothing. By the way, I see, coming down, some very fair, well-conducted people—I mean the Harcourt Dacres, one of the good Irish families. He's a *very* clever fellow—in Cases, you know, he—Yes, I think there would be no harm in—Dacres, a word with you."

It was Mr. Dacres and his daughter, with Mr. West, that were coming up. People who were not too absorbed by the great excitement of the evening had noticed the change in Mr. West's face, and some one said "he looked twenty years younger." He had indeed lost the reflective, dry, almost dissatisfied look which was his characteristic, and he seemed overflowing with spirits and happiness, and indeed his own natural age, if not some years younger. The new and distinguished comers remarked him. "Oh," said the clergyman, waving him off, "one of the set, you know. They keep up a sort of position here, and all that; but a little unpleasant to deal with. *You* understand me, Mrs. Beaufort? You know all this sort of thing. Dacres, one word." And he seized that gentleman by the arm. "See here, Dacres." Then, in a melodramatic whisper, he poured into his ear, "Really charming people—first society. Mr. Harcourt Dacres, Miss Dacres, let me introduce Mr. Guernsey Beaufort."

This ceremony was watched by many eager faces. Mr. Blacker was almost agitated as he went through this chamberlain's function. The parties then joined. Mrs. Beaufort looked with interest towards Lucy, as indeed every one did who met her. The fashionable lady's face grew softer, and seemed, among all the false countenances about her, to have lighted on something that sympathised. The two in a moment separated, and with the little girl walked behind. Mr. Dacres was delighted. He loved new faces and good people. His countenance mantled with cordiality, and bonhomie seemed to stream from his mouth. "Men of the world, sir," he would say, "understand each other instantly. You and I, Mr. Beaufort, put up with all this, because it suits us. It's a poor place, Heaven knows; but we run hither and thither just as fashion bids us. You and I know how a well-known marchioness will go into a cabin we'd be ashamed to put our man-servant in, if it's the right thing to do it. And I can tell you

a good deal of fun goes on here in its way. There are the queerest, most comical set of souls in the universe. It's worth the while of a man like you, Mr. Beaufort, coming here for a time, to see a bit of character." I run over here myself, now and again, to see my girl and wife, and I find it *impayable*, for the stories and all that sort of thing I pick up as I go. Capital schools here, too. My little girl is just leaving Miss Pringle's, where she has been well grounded, I assure you. Quite a finish, you know, you don't get at home."

Now came up the Dalrymples. "Very nice, correct people. I was telling you of them, you know. Perfectly safe to know. Not exactly reduced; but, a——Mrs. Dalrymple, let me——" And the form was gone through with all the solemnities. The faded lady, in the sweeping shawl, seemed to find comfort in the good-natured, all but homely manner of Mrs. Dalrymple, and "took to her" at once.

"Pon my word," said Mr. Blacker, looking round with pride at his work, "our party *has* increased!"

It had. The commons of the place looked at and followed them with fresh curiosity. Mr. Blacker waving his arms and describing, with his head very much back; the two matrons already confidential; the Beaufort daughter and Mr. Ernest Beaufort keeping aloof contemptuously from the other ladies; and our Lucy almost ignored. Mr. Daeres was soaring up fast into his best circuit vein, and, with his face mantling with joviality, was telling "a capital thing," taking in the ladies right and left, and even those behind him. He delighted in new people and new audiences, and was now quite at home.

Mr. West and Lucy had dropped behind. Both felt they were outside all this. They were of the class of natures which are too delicately organised to "hit it off" with strangers, and to be at home in a moment with all the world.

"I cannot endure that man," Mr. West said to her. "He jars on me at every turn. It is he who makes this place worse than it would be."

"Mr. Blacker?" said Lucy; "surely there is no harm in him?"

"Perhaps not," said he, smiling. "I always think that the people with no harm in them, do the most harm."

"Oh," said Lucy, sadly, "it seems to me every day, now that I have done with the school, to be worse. It is a dreadful place, and I wish we were far away out of it. Papa and we all would be so much happier established at some quiet, sweet, little English country place."

They were a long way behind now. West looked round hastily. "And why should this not be?" he said. "It is indeed no place for you or for *him*. The very air is corrupted. Their false patience, their miserable acting, the crowd of knaves—the men and women that herd

together here—sicken me. It is like living in a moral pestilence."

"But you stay here?" said Lucy, quickly. "You can be free if you like. A philosopher like you!" But, as soon as the words escaped her, she recollected and coloured.

He said hurriedly, "Perhaps I cannot, though I ought, indeed. My poor sister would rather be away a million times. She is pining for home. I myself loathe the place; and yet I stay—selfishly, I know, but still I cannot help it. Can you guess the reason?"

Lucy looked at him with full and trustful eyes. "Well—I——" she answered, "I *do* know it."

"And you call it folly, selfishness, absurdity, a foolish dream?"

She paused a moment, and then said softly, "No, I do not think so, since you have asked me. Far from it."

"Your father and I," he went on very quickly, "had a conversation to-day. I told him what has long been on my mind. Now let me speak plainly for myself. Things will grow worse and worse." This is but the beginning. Your poor father is helpless, and I have met enough of men of his life to know that the troubles he has passed through are but a hint of what are to come. In such a prospect I think of you—of what is to become of you later, and of him. Friends will fall away, miseries of all sorts will set in; then you *must* have a friend. Some one to turn to and protect you—and *him*," he added.

"I have thought of all this; but you cannot think me so mercenary as to suppose I would let such motives influence me. No. You must consider I am only a mere school-girl, and that I hardly know how to form a judgment on things of the world. This has come on me very suddenly. So that you must not think my hesitation is owing to any disinclination or dislike. Will you agree to this? Give me a little time to accustom myself to the idea, to appreciate it as I ought; and I assure you, at the same moment, that I cannot say how I admire your talent, and virtues, and—I can tell you, too—that there is no one else, as, indeed, you may guess, whom I care for."

Mr. West's face was growing brighter and younger every moment. "These are words I never dared to dream of listening to. I understand it all. I see perfectly what you are thinking of. Any time—weeks, months, years, if you like. It is only natural. And I shall add this condition, and, if you will let me, insist on it. As this step would, I most firmly believe, be all for your happiness and comfort, so I should wish, for the same view, that you should not consider yourself at all bound, but shall be free to change when you please. As you say," he added, smiling, "you have only just left Miss Pringle's. You have to see something of the world and its gaieties—even such gaieties as we have here. You must be free. Who knows what may come in your way? No, I am more than satisfied. And if you still think the same

at the time, why you know it will be the greater glory and happiness for me."

"Whatever you please," she said earnestly. "And I will add a little condition of my own. You know what sort of a place this is—how they talk—"

"Just what I was going to say. Our little compact shall be kept secret and sacred. Oh, Lucy, to-day seems to be another day from yesterday; the men and women whom I so abused a few minutes ago seem to me not nearly so bad! They may be decayed, but they mean well."

She laughed. That laugh was delightful to him, for he now saw that what had been his fatal *bête noire* and phantom—"Such a sacrifice for duty!" and his sister's ugly speech, "Old enough to be her father!" had no place here.

Mr. Dacres, now at the highest point marked on the scale, "exuberant good humour," had turned to seize on his daughter. "Here's my cricket, Mrs. Beaufort, the last *clove* Miss Pringle has turned out. Tell Mrs. Beaufort about Miss Pringle, Lulu, love—her terms, and teaching, and all that. I never can keep this sort of thing in my head. My dear child, what have you done with West?"

Mr. West went home, smiling to himself, and tripping as lightly over the hard trottoir as any of Miss Pringle's young ladies. No wonder. He had swallowed the elixir of life, which is love! Neighbours, knowing his hours, thought he was posting home to dinner. Miss Margaret West thought so too, and received him smiling at his eagerness. She was one of those good souls who delight in seeing others ready to "do justice" to what their hands have prepared, and whom, of course, the selfish hungry take very easy. Already she had repented for her plain speaking the night before. She knew his sensitiveness, and that he would feel it doubly; and, like many other good souls, thought how she would make it up to him in the best way known to her, by a special treat which she knew he liked—a fine browned French fowl. It was already nearly the proper time. He came bounding up the stairs.

She saw something in his face, which no prospect of fowls could have inspired. Her look of bright and kindly reception changed to one of uneasiness. "Where have you been?" she asked, without much meaning.

"Ah, Margaret," he said, exultingly, "you were wrong. I have come from her, and have told her everything, and—and I was right!"

She rose up angrily, and, with the colour rushing to her cheek, "flounced" impatiently over to the window. She understood it all.

"Then I tell you this," she said at last, turning to him, "you have done a foolish and a ridiculous thing. With all your sense! When it comes to a point of inclination or whim, the wise and the foolish seem to be just the same. I tell you, you will live to repent it."

"Not I," he answered; "never. Oh, Margaret, think me a fool—a child—what you will, but this remains: I am happier than I have been for ten years. The sun seems to shine—the world to be alive—and life to be something. If this be folly, how can you blame me? for it is so much pleasanter than wisdom."

How could she blame him. She could only mutter impatiently, but with half her displeasure gone, "Such follies—at your age!"

Meanwhile the new family had been established at "Poolyack's," in the enjoyment of every luxury. The simple tradesmen of the place—varying a little the principle of their countrymen, the Bourbons—had learnt nothing and forgotten everything, and felicitated each other on the blessing of having such patrons. They had the "air so distinguished," so "*gentil*," the genuine air, in short, which, alas! so many of their predecessors had to so fatal an extent. The furniture-maker was allowed, at his own urgent request, to send up to Paris for mirrors of a more elegant pattern to suit Mr. G. Beaufort's exacting taste. The best horses, and, singular omen! the all but new phaeton, built to a Sir Jones's order, a *difficile* gentleman, too, and mysteriously abandoned when that displayer of the Red Hand disappeared and was never heard of again. This handsome turn-out was accepted grudgingly by the Beauforts, until something better could be found. The elegance and even magnificence of their apartments was; justly, the theme of all. Men in the shabby old shooting-coats stopped each other in the street to tell of what they had just heard at Fay's shop—a humble artist, who dealt in the silver-gilt brooches, with a few watches and chains in his window—that he had received orders to have down from Paris a Breguet watch, its chains and decorations, of the very "first force." The small notabilities of the place were deposed; every one began to struggle to reach these distinguished strangers, and were never tired of repeating that "there was no mistake about them;" the uncomplimentary hint being, that "mistake" was incident to the common lot of Dieppe immigrants. Mr. Blacker, the bringer of these valuable recruits, was exalted proportionably. The people who had been inclined to sneer at his rapturous panegyrics, and laugh at his black swans, were now silenced.

The bearing of the gentlemen of this Guernsey Beaufort family, who seemed to despise the whole place, excited no resentment. It was merely agreed that Mrs. Beaufort was not up to the standard of the rest; having a kind of gentle, amiable manner, that was scarcely high-bred. It was noticed, also, that she could not talk of the "high" persons met in a former state; and, being rather overlooked by her husband and brother-in-law, of whom she seemed to stand in timorous awe, she was justly set down "as being of inferior

extraction to him;" he had married some person a little lower in degree, for money, most likely. Yet she had a wonderful sweetness of manner.

CHAPTER X. AT THE POST.

WRITING many letters, and looking out now and again on the place where the market was going on, Mr. West spent the morning busily and cheerfully. The parti-colours, the fitting to and fro of the figures, the fruit, the fish, the wares, the booths, and baskets, reminded him of the market-scene in an opera which he had long ago seen in Paris. He smiled as he caught himself admitting such associations with pleasure. Not so long ago he would have called it "a hungry place—the wretched theatrical market-women." He then went out to post his papers. Bright day, "gay little place," so it seemed to him now. On the road, he passed the little toy library, more a stall than a shop, where the English got books printed in Paris by the admirable M. Baudry, then the chief pirate of the Continent. Le Duc's, or "Le Duke," as he was translated, was a great resort. English were always coming in and going out; English were always poking and rummaging in the dark corners, choosing a book. Poor Le Duke used to complain, piteously, of having often to redeem his volumes in person from the local "Hill of Piety," which he visited in the regular way of business. Le Duke had the longest face of all that morning, and was telling Captain Filby, dismally, "Nine months' subscription, sir, and not a farthing paid. The three young ladies coming every day, and there are two dozen of my books which I shall never, never, see again!"

"Serve you right, Le Duke," was the captain's consolation. "Don't you know our English yet? Not you. You'll be trusting 'em again and again. Hallo, West, you coming for a story-book! By Jove, we'll all be paying our debts in Dieppe next!"

Another time, Mr. West would have coldly put down this gentleman, whom he always kept at a distance. He knew him thoroughly. Perhaps Mr. Filby knew the bad impression he had produced tolerably well. Most men and women have an instinct in such things. Mr. West answered him good-humouredly that morning. "I want something for my sister," he said, "and must subscribe for her. Her life is dull enough."

"Nothing like family affection. I like to see it. Have you met Blacker's new swells—flock of black swans, of course? Nothing like 'em ever came into the place. Prizes! Mark my words, sir, they'll turn up blanks. Take care of 'em, Le Duke. If anything particularly gentlemanlike comes into your shop, be on your guard, my friend; and as for any thing uncommonly lady-like——"

Mr. West could venture on a jest that morning.

"Why, this is most unselfish of you. I

hope he has had no reason to regret trusting Captain Filby."

"Is that a joke?" the other answered, sourly. "I say that Mr. Blacker has got these decent people, the Dalrymples, to take up those De Coureys, or whatever their name is. They're giving them a little drum. No use asking if you're going. Oh, no! We might as well hope to see one of the nuns out of the convent here."

"I don't know," said Mr. West, cheerfully. "I dare say we shall be there."

Mr. Filby looked after him askance, and told his friends that West was getting quite like a boy at school; and remember he told 'em that fellow would give the old girl the slip, one day, and end by marrying some low *pity* feel out of a back room.

Mr. West went on gaily to the post. He was thinking to himself, "No one shall ever be able to say I am a fool, or repeat that cant about a school-girl, and—old enough to be her father. It shall all come from *her*. She shall have her own time, and shall work it out for herself. If she were to think she was *bound* in any way, it would be a constraint." He knew human nature so well, did Mr. West; and when he was at the bar, his friends said no man could lead a witness so well, or follow the human mind in its ebbs and driftings over the flats and shallows of motives and self-interest. He was a solitary walker, and found a great pleasure in lonely wanderings up the cliffs to the old fort, where the few soldiers kept a mouldy guard. There he had his own world figures, men and women, curious events, and dreams, still more entertaining to him than real men and women and their doings. He, too, used to go down to the ships; but at the season when the world was not there. He frequented the inner port, where the small English brig ran in, and unloaded, and the Rotterdam barge with the wings folded to its sides; where the souped custom-house officers, in dingy livery, moved about sadly among casks and chests. But on this day he was looking cheerfully and with interest at the regular inhabitants and colonists. He was thinking what dramatic life there must be among them, what character, what shifts, what knavery, had a man but time and inclination to study them.

Here was the post—a dull, money-lending, pawnbroking little hovel, yet the most interesting spot in the whole place. Tragedy, comedy, farce, went on there. The little Frenchman who sat at the window, what a study of faces he could have made! The matter-of-fact Englishman, putting forward his card, "See here, Wilson, please—anything pour moi, I say?" and who turns away with an almost audible "d—n" of disappointment. The timorous girl, with face full of a wistful pain, and a voice that she tries to keep steady, and who has been sent by mamma and the girls at home for the expected letter which they know will not come. Wonderful man at the window, whose life goes by dipping

into pigeon-holes, and turning over letters as if they were packs of cards! His patience is marvellous. And what faces outside! The English reading actually in the road, the mouths altering slowly, as they read, from a long slit to a round O of consternation and despair. The more respectable lost all this excitement.

As he came away, the dingy and gloomy lane became illuminated with a flash of light, and a gay step came tripping along. It was Lucy. She was postman, manager, market-woman, everything. Within the short time she had left school, she had taken a host of duties on her. When she saw West, she ran to him. "Getting letters?" she said. "Papa wants his, though he can expect nothing as yet. And," she added, smiling, "there can be no bad news. Oh, we are all in such spirits at home, and so happy. I left him singing, and reading his newspapers, and he says he feels like a boy."

"This is good news," said he, smiling. "But what is the reason of all this?"

"Well, you should know," said Lucy, naively. "Our poor Harco says you are 'his back,' and that he does not know where he would be without you. And, do you know, he says after you have been with him he feels so hopeful. Will you promise me this?" she added, stopping and looking up wistfully into his face—"to be with him as much as you can? Some way, we do not know how to keep him up."

"My dear Miss Lucy, since I saw you I have been thinking of all sorts of things. In a few days, I will tell you what I have worked out. But I am sure I shall light on something for him—something that will clear away all difficulties, if you will only get him to second me a little."

"How good you are!" said she, enthusiastically. "I could take your hand here and kiss it."

"Hush!" he said, colouring, and looking round. "There is nothing in that. If I could only find out some way——"

"But there *is* something," she said, with an affectionate impatience that was her characteristic. "And what love! What can I do in return? Ah! let us go on quickly; there is that dreadful man."

Mr. Filby was limping down to get his newspapers at the post, and cursing the stones at every step. Gout used to seize on him at times, and put him in his worst humour. He saw the pair, and that evening, as he sat on a bench at the port, he told some of his admirers that West was sniggering and sneaking after that little chit of a school-girl, who might be his great-granddaughter, and as knowing a little shaver as any of the crew here. "He has to pay that Irishman, her father, many a nap. for letting her humbug him."

There were no letters for Mr. Dacres. "I am not sorry," said Lucy, confidentially, "for it is generally only one in ten which we call a good letter."

"We shall try and make them all good letters in future," he said.

"Ah!" she said, stopping. "I was thinking of this ever so long before going to sleep last night—a poor childish creature like me, with what you will call no mind, and you so wise, and clever, and experienced, and have seen so much life."

A look of uneasiness came into his face, and a sort of twitch about his mouth. "Well," he said, quite calmly, and even indifferently, "you remember what we agreed on; in fact, that there was to be no agreement? That is what I wished for. Only, instead of lying awake and losing that dear and precious sleep, why not think everything over comfortably and leisurely during the next few months or years, if you please. I am, as you say, wiser and older——"

"You never will understand me," she said, vehemently, and half turning back from him. "You turn everything I say. Do you want superiority over a poor young girl just fresh from a school, by forcing her to do homage to your pride by telling you that she loves and worships your gifts? I *can't* tell you any such thing. I won't. I said enough last night, when I told you I liked you, and could like you more, and would try to like you more again. If I am not clever, I can be truthful, and not all your power and cleverness of the world can get more from me than that."

With glowing face she turned and tripped hastily away. He smiled, and did not call her back. "This will do very well," he was thinking to himself, and went on to take a cheerful and brisk walk up on his favourite beat of the ramparts, where the lonely soldiers heard "the Englishman" singing to himself as he passed them.

When Lucy came home, she found her father lying on the comfortable velvet sofa, reading the newspaper.

"Well, my little Lulu," he cried, "where's papa's budget?" He was a little put out and disappointed. "And what on earth kept you?" he said, getting up. "I told that blackguard at the hotel to send me on everything in a cover. I suppose they'll keep me waiting, waiting, from day to day, sending, and sending, and coming back with our fingers in our mouths. Phew!" And he looked ruefully out of the window, with his hands deep in his pockets. "On my soul, my last lodgings, though they looked out on a yard with rails over it, had more life than this."

Lulu came up to him to coax him into good humour, as if she were Annot Lyle with her harp. "I thought you liked a hotel, Harco, pet?"

"Hotel!" and he burst into a loud laugh. "Oh, ay, to be sure. Hôtel de Diable. Little innocent. You should sit up aloft, my sweet little cherub! Well, well—hope deferred, and all that. I don't know how things will turn out. Here's precious time, youth, strength, manhood, passing away. The golden hours

when I might be making name and fame, all going from me like a puff."

"Now, now," said she, getting a pained expression. "You promised me, you know, dear. It will be only for a short time, and then—"

"Easy for you to say, 'and then.' What's the difference to you? There are my jolly fellows going Circuit—they're at Preston by this—and that prig, Colter, with as much brains as would go into my last pill-box, picking up every prisoner and every case that I should have. He'll fill the jails quick enough. God help the poor devils he defends! Where is that—that West, your affianced lover?"

Lucy gave a start, and looked round in alarm. As she did so, she saw the "little glass," "pity vare," as it was known to her English. It explained the sudden depression. "Oh, papa, you must not say that. You know it is to be secret, and to be kept secret, for all our sakes."

"And who says it's to be secret? Do I want arrangements of this sort to be huggermugged over, as if there was anything wrong or disgraceful?"

"Ah, papa, papa," she said, impetuously, and all but wringing her hands, "I see, we cannot depend on you. You won't understand. You will ruin all. This is not to be known or talked of. It is his wish, too, his earnest wish, that the cruel people about here should not be watching and talking. And I must have time to learn to love him and esteem him as he deserves to be loved and esteemed. Even this morning he was laying out plans for you—a grand future—by which you were to get back and win the high position your great talents and genius deserve. But, oh, I do fear this will spoil all."

"Was he now? Well, he's a good fellow. And I was wrong. I spoke indiscreetly. Even in presence of my own child, I see I must learn to speak by the card, and as if the whole town were listening." He said this very bitterly, the parental heart was deeply wounded by its child's treatment. "But he is a good man, a good fellow; and, Lulu, the wish of my heart is, before you and poor mamma close my eyes, to see you united to the honourable, high-minded, conscientious man who will stand by you, and shield my little girl from harm. I'll just get my hat," added Mr. Dacres, his manner suddenly changing into the gayest alacrity, "and take a turn with him, and talk things over. I like particulars in everything. 'Often' won't do with me. I tell a blackguard of a witness, 'Look at this jury, and give me the day of the week and particulars, you beggar you.' Give me a kiss, pet, and run and ask mamma for a five-franc piece for little papa. I think I'll have a quiet little feed at the café there, with one of those gentlemanly Beauforts. I declare I'll be running to seed and grow mouldy, if I don't see a bit of life."

Having obtained what he desired, Mr.

Dacres put on his hat carefully before the glass, brushed the collar of his coat, and went out.

RUSSIAN CORN.

FAR away among the wildest of the wild steppes of Russia, and in the heart of the corn countries, is a desolate village. It is one of very many, and a fair type of all villages in Southern Russia. It is built in a straggling line, the main and only street being about twice as wide as Piccadilly at its widest part. It may extend perhaps a long English mile, perhaps two, from one end to the other. The reason of its length is that every hut has a yard belonging to it about as large as Grosvenor-square, sometimes twice or three times as large. The yard serves no purpose in particular. It is a mere waste of good ground. It becomes a huge dust-heap in summer, and a bog or quagmire during the rest of the year.

The huts, generally situated all alone at the extreme of a corner facing the road, have a peculiarly miserable appearance. They are built of mud and fagots coarsely whitened, and have thatched roofs, usually with large holes in them. Every hut is divided by a clay stove into two dim holes, and is floored with dried manure. This "Kirpitch" is also the only fuel used. Few of these huts have any windows. Some of them have no doors. Everything betokens decay, misery, listlessness, indifference to any of the comforts or decencies of human life. The village looks precisely what it is: a place inhabited almost entirely by drunken men and women, utterly ignorant, utterly brutalised and demoralised by despotic government. Their sole pleasure in this world is drink. There is not a garden, not a fruit-tree, not a shrub, in sight; not a flower, not a singing-bird, not a nag horse, or a pet calf, about. No pleasant apple-faced old woman spinning in a doorway, no girl singing as she carries her milk and eggs to market. Nothing which makes the charm and beauty of an English or a German village. All is black, dreary, forbidding. Even Nature herself is sad in a Russian village. A few gaunt thin pigs walk about, hide-bound, grubbing discontentedly for offal. Bands of large shaggy fierce dogs rush out from every yard on the passer-by, and must be stoned back to their kennels before they will allow him to go upon his way.

There are only two exceptions to this universal wretchedness and squalor. Upon the highest elevation near the village stands a beautiful church, and there is not a man nor a woman in the neighbourhood but who has subscribed to it. The Boyard (or squire) himself, who gives nothing for any other object, gives munificently to that. So the church is full of the thank-offerings and sacrifices of the community. In itself a graceful and imposing structure, every nook and corner within is resplendent with gold, and silver, and jewels.

Images of favourite saints are set up with golden halos round their heads, and encased in frames of gold. The Apostles and primitive fathers of the church are all there, in vestments thickly plated with the precious metals, and with crowns and crosiers lavishly encrusted with gems. These sacred images and pictures are mostly made at the holy city of Kiev, a place to which pilgrimages are made by the Russians of orthodox faith, as they were made by the Catholics of the middle ages to Jerusalem, and as they are now made by the Mahomedans to Mecca. On the first dedication of the church a deputation of the elders of the village is sent to Kiev to purchase an image of the patron saint selected. Incredible prices are readily paid for such an image. Eighty or a hundred pounds may be raised in the poorest hamlet to buy one, although probably not a fourth of the sum could be obtained to save the whole community from annihilation. Perhaps Russia is the only Christian country in the world where men are demonstratively religious, and fond of ostentatious church-going. The Spaniards, the Portuguese, the Italians, have splendid churches, and a magnificent priesthood; but their daily church-goers are almost all women. Whereas in Russia, for one woman in a church may be seen fifty men. The outward show and demonstration of religious feeling enters into every action of the life of a Russian. He crosses himself more often than the Catholic, and at times and in circumstances which would appear to the Catholic unseemly and even sacrilegious. Gorgeous also as are the Russian churches, they stand nearly always open on week days as well as Sundays and saints' days. No man thinks of a particular dress, nor a fixed time for going to church. But poor, half-clad, over-wrought fellows will go miles out of their way to cast themselves in their rags and dirt on the pavement before the magnificent altar, and press their lips and foreheads to the stone in the extremity of their pious humiliation. They are so fond of their church, that nearly half the year is consumed in religious feasts and fasts, during which all labour and business is entirely stopped, both in town and country. Any Russian who might venture to infringe the usages consecrated by tradition on these holy days, would hardly be suffered to escape with his life in places remote from the few great cities. It is curious to record, that although the vestments of the orthodox Greek priests are surprisingly grand and costly, although their spiritual authority is almost unlimited, and they are often the only members of the community among which they live who can read or write, the priests themselves are not respected, and are ill paid. They are extraordinarily superstitious and ignorant. They associate only with the peasantry, and as a class are said by the landlords to be troublesome, meddlesome, and litigious. They are suffered to marry, and their calling had gradually become hereditary till a few weeks ago. The bishops and superior clergy of the Greek

church are chosen entirely from among the monks.

The only remaining exception to the distressing appearance of a Russian village is the trim cottage of the land agent. It looks like a rich English citizen's villa dropped down by enchantment in the midst of a barren wilderness. It is substantially and even elegantly built. It has hot-houses, stabling, coach-houses, and a great deal of smart new paint about it. The traveller whose carriage may have broken down in the frost-bound rut a yard deep before the door, will probably see, if he look upward, a queer and unexpected sight. This will be a lady and gentleman—or perhaps, though seldom, the former only—industriously posing themselves in a romantic and picturesque attitude at the window to attract his attention. If familiar with those highly ornamental engravings in the book of Fashions, he will perceive to his amazement that the lady, and not unfrequently the gentleman, are dressed in the last new toilet described and illustrated in *Le Follet* or the *Livre Rose*: dressed, indeed, perhaps hastily, and for the surprising occasion of the coming of a civilised man into this desert, but nevertheless beyond question so arrayed. The lady with the last new fan, the gentleman with the last new cane, both held perseveringly in the last new attitude, with a pertinacity quite wonderful. If the stranger should be further detained by his carriage-wheels having caught fire, and a general dislocation of springs, as will probably be the case, he may have the opportunity of improving his acquaintance with this strange couple; and he will find, to his ever increasing bewilderment, that their manners are even more surprising than their appearance. They will come down to him, and frankly accost him, if an Englishman, with some such words as: “Makeshakehands! whataclok?” all strung together. But if they find that he can speak French, they become instantly voluble, and both talk together, till there is a dispute between them, in which both appeal to the traveller for his decision. Then they suddenly recollect their fashionable manners again, and affect to treat the dispute lightly. These fashionable manners are the bane and ridicule of Russia. In fact, they are acquired, chiefly if not entirely, from French novels and fashion books, the sole mental food of the upper classes of Russian country people. Thus their conversation will be carried on for hours in the style of the latest popular French author. Sometimes they will use his very language, without a precise idea of its meaning; and if he have coined any new word particularly objectionable, it is sure to turn up in their discourse. The subject of this talk is not less curious than its style. The first effort of the speakers is an ardent endeavour to disconnect themselves from everything and everybody around them. They would like it to be believed that they have just arrived from Paris, and are about to return to Paris immediately. The slightest encouragement would

induce the gentleman there and then to accept the vacant seat in the traveller's carriage, and, quitting wife, children, friends, go on with him, anywhere, everywhere, only out of Russia. Paris is the paradise of his dreams; but any other place would do for a beginning. Of the villagers, both lady and gentleman speak with crushing contempt, and illustrate their opinions by relating some amusing and some shocking anecdotes.

What strikes the traveller unfavourably is, that although it is evident that the land agent and his wife are hospitably disposed, they do not ask him to dinner. The fact is, as he will soon discover, that they have no dinner. Throughout the whole village, not a scrap of anything edible is to be found after eleven or twelve o'clock in the morning, when the "Borsch" was served. This is the national dish. It is a soup or stew, made of salted and fermented cabbages. On feast-days there is a piece of tough stringy beef in it; on fast-days there is no beef; its place being then supplied with dried mushrooms. How stringy and how tough the beef is, may be guessed from the fact that an ox is always made to work until a venerable old age in the corn-fields before he is introduced to the cook. The vegetables used for "Borsch" are large white cabbages as big as a giant's head, also very hard and tough. These are the only vegetables commonly eaten in Southern Russia. They are salted and put into dark cellars for winter use, and form the staple food of gentle and simple all through the year. Indeed, strange as it may seem, "Borsch" is not bad when you get used to it. At any rate, you must get used to it; for it is the only thing to be got in any of the villages, and that for only one hour in the day, about noon. No eggs, bacon, milk, potatoes, or anything whatsoever which might be described by courtesy as eatable, is to be begged, bought, or borrowed. Neither is there anything to drink but the coarse fiery corn-spirit called vodka. That may always be had, anywhere and everywhere. The presumption is, that a traveller carries all he wants with him; and therefore a Russian family going from one village to another, if they have to travel more than a day's journey, form quite a caravan. Even single travellers must be so well equipped as to add considerably to their baggage; and great men send their cooks on to the halting-places, in time to prepare their necessary meals. All that can be obtained at the post-houses and villages, is a semovar or tea-kettle and a little hot water. Nothing more; no bed, no washing-basin, no towel, nothing but a room with a table, a chair, and a sofa, all alive with vermin, foul with dirt and neglect, and reeking with the stale smoke of generations of travellers carefully fastened in by double windows. The best thing, therefore, that a discreet traveller can do, is, to carry a well-stocked hamper of wholesome food and drink, from the best French or German hotel in the last large city he leaves behind him, and to ask any acquaintance he may meet on the

road to dine with him. Though the Russians are certainly the least sensual people in the world, knowing nothing about cookery and caring less, they will probably be very glad to do so, that they may have an opportunity to enjoy a little of that talk which they love better than all the savoury dishes ever invented.

It is not easy for an inexperienced person to guess what the village street is, though any one familiar with Russian travel perceives at a glance that it is the "court" or mansion of the Russian nobleman to whom, a few years ago, before the emancipation of the serfs, the village and every one in it belonged; houses, lands, bodies, and bones. Now, the villagers belong to themselves, but the whole country, sometimes for scores of miles, is the property of the Boyard, who is revelling in Paris, or at Rome, or who is running horses for the Derby, and startling the wealthiest nobles of the West by his lavish expenditure.

There, in the village street, stands this gallant prodigal's home. There he was born; and there, after a few years of profusion and folly, he will return, broken in health, ruined in fortune, to pass the remainder of a misspent life, and watch the produce of his fields pass yearly into the hands of the usurers who supplied him with the means of pursuing his brief and shameful career of extravagance, leaving all the noblest duties of life unfulfilled. Gloomy, moody, besotted, the spendthrift of London and Paris will sink, first into a mere boor, and then into an early grave. This is simply told, but it is the summary of a very common history; and when the traveller in future hears of the balls, the banquets, the running horses, and the fine jewels, of a Russian prince, he may remember this scene with feelings not so peculiarly impressed by awe and admiration for Russian princes as they once were.

The Boyard's house and dependencies cover several acres of ground. The building is as large as a barrack. It is nearly always new, or a ruin; in either case it is certain to be unfinished. The minds of the Boyard and his architect appear to have wavered between a feudal castle, a Greek temple, a Lutheran church, and a hospital. The design, vast, and the produce of a confused intelligence, has hopelessly broken down in the execution. The coarseness of the work has been whitewashed and plastered over; but the plaster has peeled off in the sun, and has been washed off by the rain. Part of the roof has fallen in; the Norman tower has sunk down, top-heavy and one-sided. It was copied, perhaps, from a print of Warwick Castle in some book of beauty; but now stands a ruin, inexpressibly melancholy, and, worst of all, grotesque.

The pleasure-grounds around the "court" have been planned on the same extensive scale as this mockery of a palace. Careful examination will show the basements of stately terraces, intended to look over such gardens as those in which the old Italians meditated; and Leo the Tenth or Lorenzo the Magnificent dreamed of empire. They are crumbling to the

dust. The long line of hothouses, meant to be filled with grapes, and pines, and exotics, are hardly recognisable. A few oxen are tethered in the apartment meant to be a billiard-room. Here and there are some bare poles standing at regular intervals. They were once young trees, planted to make a lordly avenue leading to a portico, long ago blown down. Inside the house, everything is upon the same extensive principle. No moderately near-sighted person could distinguish objects for more than half the length of any of the principal rooms. It would cost the yearly rent of two hundred acres of Russian land, at the current value of four shillings an acre, to heat any one of the rooms properly; so that they are all as damp and cold as an ice-house. Not a door nor a window will close. The flooring has never been put down, and some of the planks and squares of fine wood are rotting in a lumber-room, whence now and then a mujik carries off a few for fuel, or the land agent contrives to find a use for them. Nothing about the house is complete. There is a wide stone staircase leading from a banquet-hall to a ball-room. It has no hand-rail. Some of the walls of the state apartments are gilded and richly decorated, but in the chief drawing-room, which is the finest of all, the large French windows have never been put in, and the spaces where they ought to be are loosely boarded, so that the rain comes through. There are a few servants about. They are like the other villagers. The men among them can with difficulty be distinguished from the women. Both are rolled up in untanned sheepskins; both wear the same thick knee-boots, without which it would be impossible to wade through the mud of the streets; both leave only the face visible; both smell equally strong of vodka and bad tobacco; both look equally red, raw, pinched, and uncomfortable. There is little furniture in the house, perhaps none. If there be any, it will probably be found to consist of some gilded chairs and sofas, never used, both stowed away and moth-eaten; with a three-legged stool and a common deal table in the same room with them, for use. The stables are empty; the wine-cellars are empty. When the prince comes down on a restless flying visit once in three or four years, he brings his own bed and provisions, and puts up at the house of his agent, where he is sure of warm dry shelter. While he stays, there is nothing for him to do. No shooting, no fishing, no riding, no neighbours, no quarter sessions. So he smokes all day as he wanders with his agent about the sheep-folds and barns; takes as much money as he can possibly get; and then manages to convey himself clear off in the night, when the villagers are in bed, for fear he should be asked for any of it back again. The priests will be sure to get some of it, but nobody else has a chance; and the great man's visit, which seldom lasts more than thirty hours, leaves no trace whatever behind it. Many of the villagers, perhaps, never saw him before, and

will never see him again. Some of the old folk, maybe, remember when he was whisked away suddenly one day as a child to be educated at St. Petersburg; but this may have been before many of the present generation were born. The prince has lived so long abroad since then, that he cannot, and even will not if he can, speak his own language. He still looks upon the peasantry on his estate as mere goods and chattels, knowing nothing of their wants, wishes, lives, or deaths.

They are tolerably shrewd, too, on their side of the question. To rent some of the best corn-land in the world at four shillings an acre for virgin soil is no bad speculation at present prices, and a very few years would, and probably will, see Russian tenant-farmers grow rich. They must certainly become so, but for their incurable habits of waste and drunkenness. However, as the tenant-farmer is quite a novelty in Russia, it is to be hoped that he will soon begin to try and educate himself beyond that pitiful period in civilisation when drunkenness is not shamed away by the general condemnation and good sense of a people.

The Russian peasant of the south is, moreover, a queer fellow in several other respects besides his shrewdness in dealing with his landlord. He firmly believed that when he was emancipated from serfdom he might live all his life in idleness, his late master being bound by the State to provide for all his wants. It was a long time before he could get over his surprise at finding that he had to work for a living. So he will not work. Thus, most of the agricultural labour in the corn districts has been performed by hired gangs brought from a distance by contractors. Contracting to supply labourers has become so profitable a business, that it has given rise to all sorts of abuses and frauds. The Boyards have been entirely at the mercy of contractors, and have been either obliged to submit to any conditions imposed upon them, or leave their lands altogether untilled. Moreover, as the contractors have naturally insisted on being paid in advance, and in metallic money, owing to the rapid fluctuations in the currency, and as coin is a scarce commodity among the landowners, thousands of acres of good soil have been thrown out of cultivation, and those which have been sown have not paid the expenses of farming. Formerly, every landowner could get his land tilled by his serfs, without any money payment at all. Now, all who have not been able to command capital have been ruined. Most of the small estates, including all under ten thousand acres, have been either sold or abandoned, and mortgagees who have foreclosed on many of the large ones, supposed to be only pledged for a third of their value, have been unable to realise their advances. The best land in the best and most fertile districts, therefore, may be purchased for from thirty shillings to three pounds an acre, farm-buildings and live stock included. Another observable effect of the emancipation has been the large increase of marriages. Formerly no serf could marry with-

out the permission of his lord, and many of the worst of the old feudal customs long forgotten in Western Europe existed in full force among the Boyards. Immediately, however, all restrictions on marriage were removed, every marriageable man, woman, or child rushed into matrimony. A chance meeting in the street, a short acquaintance, or no acquaintance at all—the faintest shadow of a pretext was sufficient. No sooner had the inhabitants of any village obtained their liberty than they made haste to barter it away with each other, and as many of the newly married people as possible flocked into the towns, where life is comparatively easy and the most unskilled work highly paid, so that the villages have become more thinly peopled than before.

Such is the actual existing state of the corn countries of Southern Russia, one of the most fertile food-producing districts of modern times. Such, also, it has been as far back as any records of Russian history extend. The whole civilisation of the empire is concentrated in less than half a dozen large cities. All the rest, steppe, and hamlet, and market-town, are as wild and wretched as when Rurik first founded Ladoga on the banks of the Volkhof, or his victorious cymbals struck dismay into the fierce hearts of the Varangians and the hordes of the Tschuder.

Russia has been a poor civiliser hitherto; but a great change is at hand, and it comes from the only quarter whence salutary reforms in Russia are possible. It is to a German that this great empire is about to owe her final liberation from barbarism. Baron Ungern Sternberg has at last solved the great difficulty created by the want of hands in a country of such vast extent, and maintaining so large an army with so scanty a population. Although harassed by the ungenerous envy and detraction which attend like a shadow upon merit, the baron has at last organised a comprehensive system of military labour, which has created railroads for Russia. At first he began with mere convicts and men under punishment; but his sagacity and management were so admirable, he soon acquired so perfect a command over his workmen by a judicious system of rewards and punishments, that his opponents were forced to admit the success of his experiment. The baron's workmen began to be numbered by thousands; and as it was found that men could not do the work of navvies without being well fed and clothed, it was looked upon as a pleasant change from fetid barracks, bad rations, and hard drill, to good quarters and plenty. The system has not been fairly at work more than three years; but it has succeeded for a time, at least, in turning even the bone of a large standing army into a blessing.

The hamlets of the corn districts are already waking up into new life at the sound of the railway whistle, and the frauds which have hitherto kept the price of Russian wheat up to quotations altogether arbitrary and fictitious will soon be a thing of the past. The merchants of Odessa and Taganrog will sink into

mere brokers and shipping agents when the large producers of grain in Podolia and Volhynia can come directly in contact with the buyers of Mark-lane; and the network of railways, now extending so rapidly, will soon yield the Russian farmer a better profit than he has been ever yet able to realise upon wheat grown at less than half of the present prices.

It is also quite clear, and the British farmer should lay this fact to heart, that the supplies of wheat to be expected in a few years from provinces so extensive and fruitful as those which lie round the Black Sea and the Sea of Azoff will be almost illimitable, when communication is everywhere open from field to ship, and the waste, cost, and uncertainty of transport by oxen is but a tradition to be told to wondering hearers on a winter's night.

WORRY.

THE second of the two dog-stories we are about to narrate was so graphically and simply told to us a short time ago by the owner of the dog, a Bavarian gentleman resident in England, that, with his kind permission, we give it to the public.

We had been speaking of the wonderful manner in which instinct in all animals appears to develop from constant and intimate association with man, and had mentioned a case of a dog belonging to a friend of the late gallant General Sir George Napier, who had been taught by his master to refuse all food presented to him with the left hand. On one occasion, when Sir George Napier (who had lost his right arm at the storming of Ciudad Rodrigo) dined at his friend's house, the guests were amusing themselves by tempting this well-bred dog to lower his high standard of etiquette. All in vain. Not one of seven gentlemen present could bribe him to accept any dainty, however savoury, from the left hand, though he eagerly ate food presented with the right hand. On Sir George Napier's offering him food with *his* left and *only* hand, however, the dog glanced at the general's empty sleeve, and, without further hesitation, accepted the gift. The experiment was tried again and again, but the animal's discrimination was never at fault.

Now comes the Bavarian gentleman's anecdote.

On Wednesday, the 27th of June, 1866, Mr. Otto Striedinger, a gentleman connected with the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley, went with two friends to a croquet party at Westend, about five miles from Netley. He was accompanied as usual by his favourite dog Worry—a magnificent black retriever. The weather being extremely hot, the croquet did not begin before four o'clock, and was followed by supper; so that it was ten o'clock before the party broke up. The three gentlemen then walked back to Netley in the dusk. The footpath by which they returned led through a private park, and across a common overgrown with heather. When

about a mile from Netley, the walkers passed a reservoir, which supplies the hospital with water. The night being hot and close, Mr. Striedinger wished to give his dog a swim. He whistled again and again, but no Worry came; so he made up his mind that the dog had been hunting for his own private amusement, and had lost the track, as there was very little scent on the ground. Worry's master did not trouble himself about his whereabouts, as he had been for years a very independent dog, quite up to taking care of himself, and would doubtless find his way home later. Mr. Striedinger's arrived at the hospital, and was preparing to go to bed, when he remembered that he had to answer two letters, which he had received by that afternoon's post, just as he was starting with his friends for Westend. These letters were of great importance, and when Mr. Striedinger had looked for them without success he felt extremely uncomfortable. He instituted a search all over his rooms, turned his writing-case topsy-turvy, looked through his desk; but all in vain. He then took a light, and had a hunt in every nook and corner of his office; but came back empty-handed. Thoroughly tired and discomposed, he went to bed. Unable to sleep, he got up in the middle of the night to make another and an equally fruitless search. At last the morning sun began to light up the rooms, which was a signal for fresh investigation, with the same result. Then, and not before, the idea struck him that the letters having been delivered just as he was starting for the croquet party, he must have read them on the way thither, and must have then put them in his coat-pocket; but when he thrust his hand into the pocket, and drew it back empty, he felt convinced that his letters were lost beyond all chance of recovery. Hoping against hope, however, he resolved to make one more effort.

He rushed off, unshaven and unkempt, to retrace his steps of the previous day, looking right and left, turning over every scrap of paper he saw lying on the road, stopping wherever he recollected that he and his companions had stopped the day before, mistaking every object that was conspicuously light in the distance for the papers, and growing more despairing every minute. After walking on for about three miles, he espied a black object lying close to the foot-path. It was Worry's black head. Reproaching himself for having in his great uneasiness forgotten his favourite, he whistled to Worry, who, however, instead of showing his usual alacrity, remained lying motionless on the ground. His owner supposed him to be caught in one of the snares with which he knew the common to be thickly studded; but, on his approaching Worry, up jumped the dog, leaving exposed to Mr. Striedinger's delighted view, the missing letters, together with a number of other loose papers. There had been a very heavy dew that night, and Worry's curly coat was as wet as if he had had an hour's swim in the neighbouring reservoir; but the papers were

as dry, hot, and crisp, as a breakfast roll out of a baker's oven. There were marks of teeth on one or two of them, showing, either that before having had recourse to his subsequent and successful expedient for preserving his master's property Worry had endeavoured to collect and carry the scattered manuscripts, or, which is more probable, that he had—finding them too numerous to allow of his acting on his retrieving instincts—brought all the outlying letters within reach of the shelter of his outstretched body. It was now eight o'clock. This devoted dog had been on guard over these papers for sixteen hours, ever since the friends went to Westend at about four o'clock on Wednesday afternoon. It must have been then, and not on the return to Netley, that Mr. Striedinger dropped his letters. For, they fell out of a breast-pocket of the coat, which he hung over his arm when walking in the sultry heat of the afternoon, but which he wore on his way home at night, when it would be impossible for the contents of the pocket so to escape. The gentlemen in returning must have made some slight deviation from the path by which they had gone, and in this manner must have missed the sentinel, Worry.

THE MURDERED ORDERLY.

THERE was an Hungarian in my staff, a man closely bordering on middle age, and of extraordinary intelligence and information. He spoke five languages; his native tongue, English, French, German, and Spanish; and possessed an extensive knowledge of the history of many lands. My first encounter with him in Australia was rather curious, and shows what singular coincidences will occur in life.

I had camped one evening, after many miles of travel, near a welcome water-hole, and was sitting on a log wearily waiting for the "billy" to boil, when a man rode up driving three horses before him. He saluted me in a slightly foreign accent, and was proceeding further on, when I told him that as tea was nearly ready he had better halt there. This is customary. God bless the gallant, the generous pioneer squatters of Queensland! I say it, not so much on account of their kindness to me, for they might be supposed to bestow it on account of the office I fill; but the weary traveller, high or low, is sure of a shelter and a hearty welcome to every comfort the station can bestow.

After he had unsaddled and let his horses go loose, our dialogue commenced.

"You look ill. Have you fever and ague?" I asked.

"Very bad, sir; I am on my way to town for advice and change of air."

Here he commenced shivering violently, and I gave him a strong dose of quinine, which, with a hot cup of tea, gave him speedy relief. I sat up till a late hour that night, hearing passages of a life full of adventure and of struggle.

He had been an officer of cavalry, and

had taken an active part under Kossuth, for whom he had boundless enthusiasm. My men had withdrawn to their own camp-fire, out of hearing; so his only auditors were myself and my boy. He was consequently unreserved in his communications. After describing a cavalry skirmish in which he had been wounded and taken prisoner, he proceeded to tell me he escaped in a manner almost miraculous, and landed on English soil without a sixpence in the world.

"Never shall I forget," he said, "the crushing feeling of loneliness which came upon me when night arrived, and when I saw others hurrying, after their daily business, to their happy homes in the crowded city. Weak and hungry, I knew I could not last long, and I laid myself down in an archway to die. The pangs of hunger, however, soon roused me, and I went to a shop and disposed of some of my clothes, whereby I was enabled to live for some days. I went everywhere seeking employment, as teacher of languages, as writing-master, as clerk, as porter, but all in vain. No one would believe my story, no one would employ me without a character. I showed my wounds. I asked shelter until I could produce credentials from Hungary. Fruitless. At last, when literally starving, I roamed into the country. I had never yet begged. I had always offered my services; but now pride began to break down, and I determined to become a mendicant. I approached a country house, and saw a very young man reading in a bow-window which was partly open. Three times I went within a few paces of that window, and three times I turned away, despairing. The young man, meanwhile, never raised his head, being absorbed in his book. Hunger spurred me on. I advanced, and said:

"Help a poor man, Von Germaner?"

"The youth looked up, and said, hastily and angrily, 'No.' He was very handsome, and the angry look did not become him.

"Slowly and mournfully I retired; and, I think, for the first time since my exile, tears flowed from my eyes. Hardly had I walked a hundred yards, when I heard a hasty step behind me, and, on turning, I met the young man running without his hat.

"Stop!" said he; 'I was infernally busy with a choral ode when you spoke to me. Are you really in distress?"

"I am a beggar," I said, bitterly, "and my words are hollow, of course. The poor are always impostors—in the eyes of the rich."

"There is no of course in it," he replied; "hollow! Why, God knows, your cheeks are hollow enough. You are a real foreigner, too, and have read English authors, or you never would have used that word hollow as you did. Are you hungry?"

"I have not tasted food for three days and three nights."

"Here!" exclaimed the young fellow, "wait till I get my hat! Don't move from the spot!" And away he ran towards the house, leaving me wondering at his strange manner.

"In a few seconds he returned, breathless, and led me, with amazing rapidity, to a handsome hotel in the suburbs of the town. With wonderful speed, a substantial meal was placed before me, and he made me swallow a tumbler of excellent sherry before he would allow me to say a word. Evening set in. We drew our chairs near the fire, and I told him the sad history of my country and my own. Never shall I forget the manly sympathy of that noble fellow. When I opened my closely buttoned coat, and showed him the newspaper I wore next my skin to serve as a shirt, he complained that he had got an infernal cold in the head, and commenced poking viciously at the coals in the grate. After a long pause, he said:

"Do you know any person in England who would be likely to be of service to you?"

"I said there was a relative of mine, well off, but he lived in a very distant town.

"Well, now," said he, "look here: I am short of money. I have only got five pounds. Could you make your way to him with that?"

"I told him yes, but that I would rather take a trifle than put him to inconvenience.

"Inconvenience be hanged!" he said. "The devil! what is my inconvenience to the make-shift of a newspaper for a shirt?"

"He would not be refused. I had to take the money, and from that moment all went well with me. I fell in with a captain of one of the Australian emigrant ships, who gave me a free passage. I became a shepherd in New South Wales, saved money, bought three thousand sheep, began to lose my health, came to Queensland for change, went far into the interior, got the post of subordinate overseer, stayed in that situation until last week, when fever and ague set in, and I am on my way to Rockhampton for medical advice."

"What is your name?" I asked.

"Frederic Wiener."

"No," I said, "your name is Miska Vensirdlen."

He started up from his seat, and peered into my face.

"No," he said, after a pause, "you are not my benefactor. I should know him if age had planted as many wrinkles on his face as there are leaves on this gum-tree. Yet you are like him. And, now that I think of it, the name of the commissioner of this district is the same as his, and you are the commissioner! Great Heaven! you cannot be he!"

"No," I replied; "I wish I were as good a man. He was my only brother. He showed me the letter you sent him before you sailed. You omitted to mention that you paid him the five pounds in little more than a year. I saw the letter of credit."

"Yes, sir, on the Union Bank. But he was surely not surprised on receiving it?"

"He was not; but we were—our family, I mean. We had not seen you. Why did you change your name?"

"All respectable foreigners do so, who look for a return to their native country. Where is your brother now, sir?"

But he had only to look into my face to see the answer there.

"You need not tell me, sir, you need not tell me," he said, in accents of unfeigned sorrow, "that is one of my life's objects gone. Next to the happiness of seeing my native land again, I hoped to see him once more, and show him my gratitude."

Miska (or Michael, in English) stayed with me that night; and, as I had a vacancy in my staff, he agreed to engage in my service, merely to drive my horses while I was surveying and exploring. I knew I should cure him by a discreet use of quinine and chlorodyne, and I succeeded in doing so. Many a tale he told me of Hungary and of Deutschland, and many a happy hour we enjoyed at the camp-fire in the lonely, melancholy bush.

One evening we came to a sheep-station, where we found two shepherds. We were informed by them that, four days back, when only one shepherd lived there, he saw a large mob of blacks at the creek to which he had gone down for water, and which was about a quarter of a mile from his hut. The blacks were all armed with spears, waddies (clubs for throwing), nullah-nullahs (clubs for close combat), boomerangs, and tomahawks. He was without a weapon. They sent forward two or three gins (females) to him, but he waved his hand, said "Yambo" (begone), and they stopped. He then retreated slowly to his hut, got the sheep secured in the yard, fastened the door of the hut, and, having previously possessed himself of his carbine, went off for assistance to the head station, sixteen miles off. An armed party started thence early in the morning, and found that the blacks had dug under the hut, and had taken flour and various other things. They tracked the savages for a long distance, until they came to rocky ridges, very thickly timbered, where they gave up the pursuit.

I had to follow this creek down, and I issued orders that no man of my party should go out of sight of the camp, without a revolver. A few mornings afterwards some of my horses were not to be found, and the men scattered themselves to look for them. All were at last brought in save Miska's. I pushed on with my son to the head station, which was eight miles off, leaving directions with my Chainman to assist Miska. That same evening my party arrived, and camped near the station; but the horses were not yet found. My Chainman came up and reported himself to me, but Miska I did not see that night. Next day was Sunday. About eleven o'clock in the morning I went down to inspect my camp, and found that Miska had set off an hour before, expressing his determination to stay out until he found the animals. He took two or three days' rations, and told my Chainman that he had his "shooting-iron" with him. He did not return that night, and next morning I had to set off with my party to complete the adjustment of boundaries. A good many days elapsed before I returned. In this interim two travellers

saw a body floating in a very long water-hole near the place where I had last camped before I departed. This was the corpse of poor Miska, greatly decomposed, but not sufficiently so to conceal the spear-wound which had robbed him of his life—a coward-thrust in the back.

The word was passed from station to station (there are but few in that remote nook of earth), and in a day or two, eight or nine determined men, mounted on splendid stock-horses, and guided by two tame blacks, were on the death-trail.

For about a mile and a half, their course lay through what is locally called "Old-man Triodia"—a sort of spintex grass. It covers the whole surface of the ground, and is from three to four feet high. The blades are such strong prickles, that I have doubled thick mole-skin trousers four times—that is, made *eight layers* of the fabric—and yet have passed the spear-blades through them as swiftly as you pass a needle through cambric. But the blacks make their way through this obstruction with facility and speed.

The party now began to approach the watershed, which in that particular place was very wild and rough. Night drew on, and there was no appearance of the blacks. The traces were fresh. No fear was entertained of failure in coming up with them, and our friends quietly camped beside a rocky water-hole. Next day, at an early hour, they resumed their march.

Suddenly one of the black guides turned back to a squatter, and said, with great glee:

"Cobawn gin like along a billy-bong." (Plenty of gins near a water-hole.)

"Where that fellow, billy-bong?"

"Close up that fellow."

In a few minutes we had surrounded the gins, and the wretched creatures shrank cowering to the ground. They were at once secured.

Few white men slaughter gins, no matter how great the provocation. I have scarcely ever known them to be killed unless by mistake. Nevertheless, nothing is better established than the fact that they are infinitely worse than the males, as the instigators and the chief and primary agents of most of the outrages committed by the latter.

Many questions were asked of the gins by the guides, which they answered readily.

Next day the party struck sharp off to the north, over a high range covered with trees, and were surprised to find water in many clefts in the rocks, whereas a drought had prevailed for some time in the low country. It would seem that on this very high ground the spicula of the tree-leaves frequently attract the electricity of the clouds, and thus produce showers which do not reach the lowlands. The stony ground was very severe on the horses, for station-horses are never shod; their hoofs grow even too quickly, and often need paring. When night began to close in, the guides strenuously urged the party not to camp, but to follow them in silence. Some were opposed to this, but gave way; and at

length, after emerging from a pretty thick shrub, they were gratified by the sight of numerous fires in a hollow about a mile off. On a dark night the fires of a camp of black fellows have an imposing effect. Each family have a number of small fire-sticks placed around them. When nearly extinguished, they can fan these up in a moment. I have often seen nothing but tiny sparks here and there, and in less than a minute have seen a mile of blazing lights.

The party tied their fasting horses up, and gave them a few bunches of herbage. They themselves took cold meat and "damper;" they could make no tea, as a fire would be discovered by the enemy.

Half an hour before dawn every man was on his horse, and moving towards the silent camp. Two went round by the right, and two by the left, the rest went straight onward. Very quickly they advanced, and halted for a space, the blacks giving no sign; but at length, the day having now broken, the dogs of the savages began to bark, the blacks bounded to their feet, and found themselves confronted by foes in three directions. With a loud "whoop!" avengers were among them, shooting them down from the distance of a yard. One squatter saw a huge fellow with a map of Queensland (it had belonged to poor Miska) hanging down from his shoulders like an apron. He shot him through "Port Denison," which covered the region of the heart. The savages, seeing there was little chance of escape, whirled their weapons in grim silence. They never think of submitting by word or question, any more than they expect that the "wallabies," on which they feed, will submit to them in the chase. Boomerangs, waddies, spears, flew thickly, but with little effect. A savage, seeing a rider about to cover him with a revolver, rushed forward, and dodged on either side of the horse's head in so surprisingly active a manner, that the rider, who was almost disabled in the left arm, could not fire without danger to the horse. Another squatter, seeing this, rushed forward to decide the affair, when the black suddenly sprang to the horse's tail, and dodged about there, in like manner. It was not without great trouble that he was killed. Another squatter, having pushed a savage hard, the savage suddenly wheeled round and sent a waddy against his enemy's head with such violence as to knock him off his horse. In a moment the tomahawk was raised above the prostrate man; but, with the speed of lightning, the double-trigger "Tranter" was raised too, and with a guttural "owgh!" the savage fell dead.

Meanwhile the gins and the piccaninnies were flying about, shouting their shrill "e-e-e's," and "ow-ow-ows," but it was over in a few minutes, and then the avengers began to reckon up their work. Eighteen blacks lay dead, and one piccaninny. Fierce gleams flashed from the white men's eyes when they came upon the dead child.

"Who killed this boy?" exclaimed one.

Of course no one had killed him, and, in fact, no one had meant to kill him. The boy had perished by a stray shot in the *mélée*. Very few hurts had been received by the whites. On examining the blacks' camp, almost all of poor Miska's property was found; among other things, his cheque-book, but all the money he had had about him was gone. The piccaninnies were taken prisoners by the squatters, and shared among them: certainly a fate for the better in respect of the boys.

From one of these—some months afterwards, when he could speak a little English—I received a mimetic description of Miska's death. The blacks of Queensland generally are perfect mimics. He described Miska walking along with his erect, military bearing; then a sudden stop, and a peering look into the neighbouring scrub, as though he had heard a noise, or seen something suspicious. Then he described the walk renewed, another stop, and a rather frightened look around; then, the sudden consciousness of being "circumvented" by the blacks, who now begin to appear from among the trees; then, the quick but bewildered turn to fly; then, a *whirr-r-r-r-r*, and a boomerang strikes him on the temple; he reels, puts up his hand to wipe off the blinding blood, and sinks slowly to the ground. Then, the rush of the savages (silent as Fate) towards him. He struggles to his feet, and joins his two hands together. Then, came the halt of the wretches about ten yards from him; then, the poising of the spear, the hurtling of the missile through the air, the death-cry of my poor friend as it grided through his frame; his falling back, and the protruding spear supporting him for an instant; his rolling half round, and tearing up the grass; then, the blow on the head with a nullah-nullah. All this was shown to me with appalling effect, and, I have no doubt, with perfect accuracy.

THIS AND THAT.

THOUGH often receiving the histrionic invitation to "look on this picture and on that," from the stage, from journals, public orators, and others, I have seldom had an opportunity of contrasting the two generic portraits in so favourable a manner as lately. "*This*," which I went to "look on," was lying in a fair-sized harbour, close to a leading Irish port. Why should I affect mysteriousness in the business, and not say Kingstown? "*That*" was in the leading Irish port itself. Again, why mystery, and not say boldly Dublin?

At Kingstown, lay one of the finest ships of our passenger navy now afloat. She was fresh from the builder, lying there with a vast and solemn dignity, a dark serviceable rudeness, with a plain air of simplicity and work, now the correct tone for our ocean-going vessels. She had upon her a dreamy air of power; a sense that she could move herself with little exertion—a look conveyed mainly by the easy motion of the screw, the perfection of graceful

walking: whereas paddles are as the heavy, plunging, stumbling walk of an awkward woman whose feet are catching in her dress at every step. She looks a vast citadel. Her officers boast that she is next in size to the Great Ship of all. She has all the modern ingenuities. She is steered—not in the old vulgar way—a hapless mariner in a gale, staggering and clinging for the bare life to his wheel, washed, drenched, beaten—but on the most luxurious principles. The steerer has an apartment to himself and his wheel, where he can be quite comfortable and luxurious. He has not to peer out at the end of the ship, but is indifferent about the direction of her head, and gets his information below by mysterious signals. That head of hers he may be directing on to a rock; that is not *his* business. Nor does he convey his impressions to his rudder by the laborious agony of chains; but works by an elegant little series of cog-wheels and levers, which play smoothly, and which “a child could work.” There is a donkey-engine, with a funnel as large as that of a common paddle-steamer, and this faithful servant I find to be as useful as the persecuted animal who serves the costermonger. It warms the ship through and through with hot-air pipes; it sets the sails, gets out the luggage, heaves up the anchor, does any little job that is wanting. I find there are three decks: those below, splendid airy places, eight or nine feet high, vast expanses which would do to drill volunteers or play football in, and which will give accommodation to some thousand or, at a press, twelve hundred emigrants. No more horrors of the middle passage now! We may fancy the genteel passengers on this esplanade, and they will not have need to know that there are twelve hundred plebeians most comfortably bestowed below.

So much for “this” picture; now for “that.”

Within half an hour’s journey was the port of Dublin, crowded with many steamers and vessels. This shape of human life is not unentertaining. The bustle and incident attending on loading and unloading has a dramatic air. The entertainment of seeing a vessel going off never cloy, for the simple reason that the spectacle of human nature never cloy. Here, I see, nearly every day, the embarkation of the pigs—the farce, the pantomime of the entertainment, side-splitting, as is said of a diverting clown. To see those creatures herding together near the gangway, their ears hanging, their snouts to the ground, their strange eyes glancing warily at the men. They have organisation, surely, as the *men know*: who, with bated breath and figures narrowly stooped, and now watching this side and now that, with arms spread out, clearly anticipate danger from the little band. And they are right; for here, with a yell of agony, the sally is made, in concert and at all points. The main body is driven back, but half a dozen stragglers escape between the legs of their persecutors, oversetting them. The distraction of these is

infinitely amusing, they not knowing whether to pursue or to stay with the main body. So, too, when the stragglers are at last captured, and are brought back, frightfully yelling as though they felt the knife already in their necks. Though, indeed, it is no wonder that they thus exclaim, for their progress must be painful, seeing that two men drag at a fore-leg, and a second at the two hind-legs. This is the farce or comedy; but the true tragedy is in the embarkation of the hapless beasts who take over good beef for Liverpool and Manchester dinner-tables. They go on board with tortures. We see the scared herds standing about in hundreds, some weary of their long day’s shaking on railways. Unhappy beasts! they are disinclined to further voyaging. Savages about them make a cordon, and drive them towards a slanting gangway, made for their special inconvenience. I have seen thousands of the unhappy brutes put on board at Dublin, and the amount of torture so inflicted daily would, if appraised in some way, or made into a sum-total, be appalling.

At the top of the sloping gangway which leads down to the vessel’s deck, their sufferings may be said to begin, though previously there has been some beating and torturing to get them in a convenient and handy group. When all is ready, and the executioners are at their post, the work begins; shouts, yells, rattles of sticks on ribs, set in, under which pressure some of the foremost are got to the entrance of the gangway. Seeing the unexpected descent, they turn their heads and try to retreat. Then the fury of their tormenters rises. They are driven afresh to the entrance. Their faces, turned away, are beaten, the sticks rattling on their foreheads until the unhappy brutes toss them in perfect agony, and have to turn then to the gangway for escape. One fellow has a tail in his grasp, and, screwing it cleverly and slowly round with exquisite and protracted agony, forces the animal forward. He is well seconded by a coadjutor, who gives a series of sharp “prods” with a stick in that well-known tender corner of the flank where the hind-quarter begins, and where there is a soft place. A third drives his elbow dexterously into another soft place just over the shoulder. Under this inducement the maddened beast plunges forward wildly, staggers down the stage, and would rush frantically into the ship but for a fourth ruffian waiting for him at the bottom, who, dexterously slipping a halter round his horns and twisting the end round a bolt, brings him up “cleverly,” nearly dislocating the neck. I have seen the wild eyes of the poor brute nearly roll from his head, as he endured this agony. The whole has the air of a personal encounter; the men, like savages, engaging a whole herd. Where there is what is considered a peculiarly obstinate brute, the whole force is concentrated on him. A dozen combine to exercise every device of cruelty. There is excitement about it; and when victory comes, which it always does, there is positive exultation. When we

think that the cattle trade is what is called a "staple" of Ireland, and that thousands of cattle are put on board steamers every day in this shocking fashion, and are crammed on the decks, their heads tied down, exposed to awful weather, it is appalling to think of the amount of cruelties such a profitable business entails.

I see a train of these unfortunates thus forced on board. What is the contrast to the stately, gigantic, and all but perfect, American liner lying at Kingstown? From the deck of the liner you can actually see the short stout chimney and obese person, as we may call it, of the older vessel. She is like an old coach beside an express train: with this difference, that the old steamer has not been driven off *its* road yet. She is called the Royal William; and knowing who the William was to whom the compliment was paid, it must be a long time ago since the nautical christening was performed. There she lies—her after-portion as clumsy as an old-fashioned chest of drawers; her bows enormous, burly, and corpulent. She was once upon a time, we have no doubt, considered "the perfection of naval architecture." She is all greasy and black, and as old-fashioned as any old lady in clothes of the cut of the last century. Once, after her successful trip to New York, she carried the mails, and it was considered very luxurious travelling to be tossed in her. She has now come down to these baser uses—carries about cattle. Her predecessor, the *Sirius*, the first steamer that *ever* crossed the Atlantic, was an Irish boat also; and it is often told in Liverpool how the owners did not choose to trust their letters to her, but sent them by the regular mail sailing-packet; and how, too, when a strange vessel fell in with her about three days from New York, the mate of the strange vessel came running down to the captain, quite aghast, with news that they would be on shore in a few minutes, for he had seen a steamer!

ROMANCE OF TWEEZUM HALL ACADEMY.

WE all hated Christian Bohné before we knew him. After that, we hated him a little more; for the disappointment he inflicted upon us by turning out the chap he did. He was introduced into the school with a flourish of trumpets by Mrs. Normicutt, the doctor's wife. By her own confession, however, she knew nothing of herself about this fellow, and took him entirely on trust, dazzled by a romantic fog that hung about him, through which there glimmered the phantom of a coronet! It was but a phantom, for Christian Bohné, at best, was only the ward of the Lord Viscount Kalydon, and, though singularly like that noble person, was not considered to possess, on that ground, an undoubted right to the succession, or to be styled—as he always was—the "Honourable." It often

bothered us, this resemblance, as it did Christian himself. Christian had not seen his noble guardian half a dozen times in his life, and the likeness, if not mere fancy, must have been the result of pure gratitude and good feeling on his part, and was no doubt appreciated by his lordship at its true value.

Additional expectation, on the part of us juniors, attached to Christian's arrival—from a rumour, traced to Margaret the maid—that his latest abode had been the tropics; a region abounding in diamonds and alligators, gold, ivory, leopards, wild peacocks, monkeys, whales, pomegranates, savages, and humming-birds, heaped in rich confusion. It was calculated that Bohné's experiences—if he should prove communicative—would procure us the luxury of many a sleepless night; and it was a sad blow that he was lodged in an apartment all to himself, where, indeed, it was physically impossible that any less noble presence should invade his privacy, there being only space for the Honourable Mr. Bohné's bed, box, and chair.

The Lord Viscount Kalydon made a considerable sensation in the neighbourhood, owing to an objection started by the prouder of the two proud steeds to being pulled up at the door of a modest suburban mansion. The affability of the English aristocracy is so well known, that it will neither shock nor surprise any one to learn that Lord Kalydon chucked Margaret the maid under the chin, and requested to know whether, in Cheyne-walk, Chelsea, blushes were in season all the year round? The appearance of Mrs. Normicutt on the threshold of the parlour door prevented his lordship's obtaining the desired information. This lady had a way of addressing people as if she were taking them into custody on a very serious charge. In this manner was Lord Kalydon promptly apprehended and lodged in the parlour, Mr. Bohné standing by like an individual labouring under very strong suspicion, but against whom no direct charge is as yet made.

"There, be off, you young rascal, and look at the playground," said his lordship, good humouredly; "you needn't come back." Receiving a pound and a punch on the head, the Honourable Mr. Bohné slunk away.

The interview between the lord and the lady was but brief. Not to receive a whole deputation of peers would the doctor have quitted his schoolroom during morning lessons; so Mrs. Normicutt did the honours, and more. She accompanied his affable lordship to the very door.

On being informed that his tender guardian and relative had departed, Mr. Bohné put his left knuckles into his eye. It was only to keep up appearances; for when he was presently ushered into the schoolroom, no trace of unmanly agitation disturbed his countenance, which was of the brown-yellow tint—not to add flatness—that characterises the battle-dore. His nose seemed to have arrived at its present peculiar form by having been habitually

pressed against a sooty pane. His mouth was wide and protuberant. He had small, gleaming, malignant eyes, like those of a mongoose when it sights a snake. Altogether, the fellow had a carnivorous aspect; insomuch that, but for an impression that cannibalism was less in vogue than formerly in the tropics, we might have easily persuaded ourselves that the Honourable Mr. Bohné had not been wholly unaddicted to that luxury. As it was, a whisper was considerably passed round to Looby Weekes—a fat chap in the junior class—that he had better avoid the eye of our new schoolfellow, at least till after dinner. Christian was very loose-jointed—tall, awkward, and sprawly—and, when in energetic action, had a way of working all his legs and arms together, like a machine suddenly wound up. He was about fifteen, and in tails; but these were, he confessed, his first, a circumstance his manner of twitching round to see how they followed would have sufficiently betrayed without it.

The doctor introduced him to the two masters, and then, in a few kind words, to us, recommending us to show him the premises, bounds, &c., and, in short, make him perfectly at home. This we did, on the doctor's exit—by forming a motionless and speechless living circle about him, and examining him calmly from head to foot, as if he had been a specimen sent express from the tropics for deposit in a museum of natural history. Mr. Bohné did not resent the scrutiny in the manner his truculent appearance rendered more than probable. He seemed, if anything, rather flattered—"posing" himself for our inspection as if he had been a lay-figure, though not, it must be owned, selecting the attitudes most familiar to the studio. Tacitly responding to the challenge to let us see what he was like, he went through a series of antics, twisting his limbs, cracking his joints—even turning an occasional somersault—all the while preserving the most profound, not to say melancholy, gravity; so that he resembled nothing so much as a depressed baboon, winding up the performances of a long public day. This done, he regained the human form, and, taking out a coin, spun it in the air.

"Crik! he's got a sov.," squeaked a small voice, from the top of a desk.

Mr. Bohné turned on his heel, and executed a slow and lurid wink. It might not have been intentional, but this single gesture so disconcerted Charley Lysons that he slid down into the general company and was seen no more.

"I say, what a jolly lot of fellows you an't!" remarked the new arrival, relapsing into easy affability. "Can't you stump up something to eat? This sort of thing takes it out of a fellow, you know."

"We shall have dinner in two seconds and a fraction," said Snashall Major, who always pined for that festive season, and was invariably first at the board.

"Two seconds will not do," replied Mr. Bohné, with decision. "'To be fed, nourish-

ingly (with licorice, if possible, or, failing that, toffy with almonds and a little ginger), every six minutes while he is growing,' were the directions given by my phys—Ha! that knell! Do, then, these ears deceive me? Nay, 'tis terr-rue. To dinner!"

And stooping down, as if he had been going on all fours, the Honourable Christian made a headlong charge through the circle, in the direction of the dining-room. A most exciting contest ensued—between three—Snashall Major and Ambrose Hall pressing the favourite hard. Nothing else was in the race. Christian made strong running, but was passed both by Snashall and Ambrose, the latter going on second. They arrived in this order to the turn, where Christian, who had run with remarkable patience, called upon himself and gallantly responding, landed first, beating Snashall by a nose.

There was at Tweezum Hall Academy a received idea that Doctor and Mrs. Normicutt lived with their boys. They certainly sat down with us, and, if crumbling bread and playing with a potato means dining, undoubtedly partook of our meal; but something of a more genial character subsequently occurred in the parlour.

The performance of our schoolfellow at this his first dinner did honour to his tropical breeding. He ate like an alligator. Tweezum House was, to do it justice, a liberal establishment. Nobody was stinted. Even when the appetite of Snashall Major began to show signs of languor, Mr. Bohné's was brisk as ever; and when he demanded a fourth supply, the countenance of the patient and esurient doctor exhibited amazement.

Mr. Bohné appeared to be indicating a fifth attack; but this was too much.

"Ohe! jam satis," muttered the doctor; and the banquet came to a close.

"Do they call *this* dinner?" grumbled Christian, as we thronged into the playground. "I call it a swindle. I shall write to Kalydon, and have this put to rights."

Rather to our astonishment, he did write, using an enormous envelope, and securing his epistle with two seals. But it made no difference, the despatch being handed back to Mr. Bohné in the course of the day, opened, but enclosed in a still larger envelope, with *three* seals, inscribed with the doctor's best compliments. Mr. Bohné laughed melodramatically (he had been at the theatre with Lord Kalydon on the previous night, and had witnessed a piece by a popular author, the cast of which included five burglars, a deserter, two convicts, nine bigamists, the usual detectives, and a Jew). Mr. Bohné laughed, I repeat, and observed, in a voice that could only be compared to that of a lion growling through a speaking-trumpet, that "a time would come."

There was no pride about our honourable friend. He entered frankly enough into our habits and pleasures, and there were even some who foretold that he would prove, upon the whole, an acquisition to the commonwealth. It

did not prove so. As his real disposition developed itself, the prejudice we had conceived against him was completely justified. He was as spiteful, savage, and uncertain as the animal he so much resembled; but his two leading peculiarities were his inordinate appetite, and a tendency to transports of passion, the more appalling in their intensity from the slightness of the provocation given. A single word, a mere look, might induce one of his paroxysms, and *then*, my lads, stand clear. Christian would snatch up the first article at hand—no matter of how dangerous a character—a heavy inkstand, a stone, a knife—and launch it—not intending to miss, but with deadly aim and purpose—at whomsoever had affronted him. The escapes I witnessed from some fatal injury were almost miraculous. In the absence of any missile, Christian would fly upon the offender with the rage, and very much the action, of a tiger, and, unless the victim could save himself by flight, or some friend to humanity interposed in time, kicked, tore, and buffeted him as if nothing short of life would satisfy his revenge. For the moment, the boy was like a very fiend. Fortunately, the gust of passion was brief.

It was on one of these occasions that I managed to incur that hatred on the part of Mr. Bohné, whence arose the remarkable incident that forms the subject of my story.

There was, in the lowest junior class, a little creature called Murrell Sillito. He was as pretty as a girl, and being fragile and delicate, was treated among us with as much tenderness as if he had been that twin-sister of whom he was always talking, and who was understood to have vowed self-destruction on finding she would not be allowed to accompany him to school.

Like most pets, Master Murrell would occasionally indulge in perversities. These were little heeded. One would as soon have resented the chirp of a tom-tit. Nevertheless, to the horror of the playground, a loud shriek from Murrell, one day, announced that he was in trouble, and the child was seen flying, with all the power of his little bare legs, before Christian, who, with eyes blazing with maniacal rage, and his great mouth agape, pursued him, grasping a large jagged flint in act to throw.

Before any one could interpose, the missile flew, whistling past Murrell's golden curls so close that I almost expected to see them turn red with the child's blood. With increasing fury, Christian caught up a hoopstick, and renewed the chase. Bohné took malignant aim, and was in the very act of flinging, when, panting with speed and excitement, I managed to throw myself in the way. I heard a snarl like that of a wild beast, felt a sharp pain across the brow, and became blind. I was in collision with some one, struck wildly forward, then reeled to the ground. On being picked up, and the blood washed from my eyes, it was shown that I had received a severe graze on the forehead, but nothing worse.

My opponent was less fortunate. My blind blow had done more execution than I intended. As ill-luck would have it, my hoopstick was in

my hand, and the contact between it and Christian's nose so injured that already depressed organ, that the damage proved irreparable, and Mr. Bohné—between whom and myself no remarkable good feeling had before existed—became my deadly foe. Although public taste inclined to the opinion that anything that could befall Christian's nose *must* be for its advantage, that gentleman—attached to, if not positively vain of, this appendage to his face—never forgave the misadventure.

The first time we met in the schoolroom, his now nearly level nose strapped and plaistered, he put his face close to mine, and hissed in my ear: "I should like to suck your blood. *And I will.*"

These were the last words he ever addressed to me. Regarded as a threat, they made as much impression as might a fly perching on my nose; still, it is never pleasant to be haunted by the undying animosity of a fellow with whom one is perpetually in contact. I therefore made one or two tacit advances towards reconciliation. But in vain. Personally, I had no fear of him; for, though full two years younger, I was strong, and could use my fists.

It might be expected that Murrell Sillito, whose little golden head mine had probably saved, would have shown himself grateful for the interference. This boy, from his affectionate ways, had been my especial favourite—I might say, confidant—for had he not been, since the previous "half," in sole and singular possession of that deep secret of my soul, of which I am about to make wider confession? I was in love! In the full delight of that strange sweet emotion, without sensible beginning, without predicable end—a boy's first passion.

As Murrell was in a similar position (the object of his adoration was a bloated rabbit), it was apt and natural that we should establish relations of mutual confidence. I had never repented of this step. The patience and sympathy of Murrell were absolutely fathomless. Neglecting that constant companion, his whipping-top, of which he was madly fond, he would sit beside me, sucking the highly flavoured eel-skin lash, or thoughtfully rolling the marbles in his pocket, his great blue eyes fixed on mine, as he strove, with all his might, to obtain some faint idea of the feeling that so powerfully wrought within his elder friend.

My acquaintance with—and contemporaneous worship of—the goddess Tseery (so Murrell called and spelled Mademoiselle Desirée Lamond) commenced on a dampish afternoon, when, while staking round the nearly-deserted playground on my stilts, I heard a slight rustle in the branch of a pear-tree above my head, then a youthful voice, sweet but imperious,

"Holà, le p'tit! Mon volant, zat is, de sut-lecot!" pointing to a feathered object entangled in the tree.

With some deliberation—for I thought the command a trifle unceremonious—I recovered the "sutlecot," and flung it over.

"Le petit!" "Petite" herself. The speaker

was only two, say three years older than I, and this assumption of the authority of age hardly warranted the impert— the imp— The thought fluttered, died within me, as I looked fairly at the radiant vision that had settled on our humble wall, and was striving with its little white hands (one of which grasped a battledore), and with better fortune than attended Humpty-Dumpty, to maintain its position there.

"Sank you, ze leetle," said the celestial shape. But it did not disappear. On the contrary, it clung more tightly to the happy top of the wall, gazing at me with a mixture of contempt and interest, such as an immortal might feel for one of earthly mould, who was not without agreeable traits. "Are you very bad?"

"Bad!" If quivering with admiration from the topmost hair on my head to the extremity of my preposterous timber legs meant bad, I was in a very precarious condition indeed. I could only gasp and stare, and the goddess continued:

"Ze poor leetle! Qu'est ce que tu as fait? Zat is" (her look changing to unmistakable compassion), "why do you this? Is he cruel, your master? Do zey give you mosh wheep?"

"Mademoiselle est Française?" I stammered, parrying the question while I endeavoured to regain my mental and bodily equilibrium. Romeo himself would have been embarrassed on stilts.

"I am not Angleesh," said the radiant presence, frankly, "but I speak him beautiful, quite in the native. Let us see. I am Desirée Lamond, and you, you are leetle Harri—leetle John—how?"

I responded that my name, to the best of my belief, was *not* John How, but Charley Milborne. Then, confused at having contradicted, however justifiably, the first assertion of a goddess, I felt that, if stilts could kneel, I should have assumed that posture, implored forgiveness, and vowed that I was henceforward John Brown, Peter Pips, or anybody she deigned to pronounce me.

"Ah! Miel—Mil—how zat is difficult! I shall call you 'ze Leetl,'" replied the celestial Thing, with sudden decision, and a smile that doubled me up, stilts and all, flung me half way to the clouds, and, catching me as I descended, laid me in a bewildered heap on the ground. There, at least, I found myself, when my senses returned. The perch my goddess had occupied was vacant of her glorious form, and one of my stilts was broken. So was my peace.

The romance struck root, and flourished mightily. The fact that we never met, threw me, more than might otherwise have been the case, upon imagination. She became associated with everything I read—everything I thought of, everything I saw. In study she was my Nymph, my Dryad, my blue-eyed Pallas-Minerva—watchful, though unseen, of her mortal worshipper. In sport, she was the arbitress, dispenser of prizes, and of fame. In gardening I called my rose "*Desirée*," nursing bud after bud into perfection, in a bewildered hope that one, or other of them might reach,

by some arrangement not clearly laid down, what, in confidence to Murrell Sillito, I described as the Paradise of her bosom. In short, though I adopted the language of the broken-hearted, I never was, nay, nor ever shall be, so perfectly content and happy in my life.

See her, however, I did. Once a week—her family attended the same chapel, to which, in a long sinuous column, chattering from its head to its tail—Doctor Normicutt's young friends resorted on the Sabbath. There were two other young ladies, and two ladies who had been younger still, in the Lamondian pew, and Desirée sat at the end nearest ours.

I am sorry to say that this last fact exercised a material influence on my devotions. My eyes, and therewith my thoughts, riveted themselves upon my beautiful mistress, and defied all efforts to dislodge them. For some time she did not seem to recognise her "*Leetle*." When she did, it was with no encouragement, so to speak. Still, at certain rare intervals, she would, as if in sheer pity of the boyish admiration expressed in my incessant watching, turn her bright face, flash me an impatient but not angry look, as if she said, "There, be satisfied," and return, with double earnestness, to her interrupted orisons. Absurd as it now appears, my life, at this period, dated only by these weekly visions. No sooner had the last flutter of her white dress disappeared down the chapel stairs than I began to count the hours, nay, the very minutes, until another Sunday should restore her to my eyes; and vain would be the attempt to depict the gloom and misery that overwhelmed my soul, when a wet Sunday displayed the Lamond pew a dreary void. With what deadly hatred did I glare at an unfortunate stranger, who, on one of these occasions, was inducted by the pew-opener into the empty seat!

There occurred, after many weeks, one other interview. I was in my little garden, which happened to be in a corner, round the angle formed by a tool-shed, when a voice, that made my heart leap, spoke softly from the top of the wall.

"Pst!" said the celestial sounds. "Say zen, ze Leet'l."

I looked up. It was she!

"Ecoute donc, le p'tit," said the goddess, in a hurried whisper. "*Il ne faut pas me regarder comme ça.*" She threw into her face an intense expression, such, I presume, as mine had been accustomed to wear in gazing at her, as I have described. "Mamma has written to ze doctor. You will walk in stilt." (She evidently held that this was a form of punishment.) "Be also mosh wheep, mon pauvre, oh, mon pauvre!"

The goddess seemed about to cry.

"Oh, stop. Please don't!" said I, as agitated as herself. "Don't mind me—that is, yes—I won't—if I may—ah, mademoiselle, do not forbid me *that*." From a subsequent examination of the knees of my light blue trousers when I recovered self-command, I imagine I must have assumed the attitude of supplication.

"Mon Dieu! You wish be weep?" sobbed the bright one.

"If you would weep," I began, confusedly; but, recollecting myself, "I will be whipped twice a day," I went on firmly, "and walk on stilts to my lamentable tomb, so that I may continue to look on you."

The goddess had barely time to flash upon me one of her radiant smiles, when a burst of approaching voices startled her, and she vanished with the suddenness with which the enamelled warbler on the lid of a Geneva snuff-box dives into its little nest of springs. I rubbed my eyes, also my knees, and resumed my spade, but not with the same tranquillity. Our prospects—might I say "our"?—were darkening. Her mother had written to the doctor. Now the doctor was particularly sensitive on the score of our demeanour at church. Conscious that he could, himself, see nothing beyond the length of his own nose, he was wont to accept, with distressing alacrity, any report made by other parties to our disfavour. The consequences—next morning—were not agreeable. No matter. I had been assured of the sympathy, witnessed the very tears of the lode-star (whatever that was) of my affections, and surely that should suffice.

Hastening in search of my friend Murrell, I confided to him what had happened, and demanded his advice. Mr. Sillito, being engaged at trap-ball (sides), could not compromise the interests of his party by giving me more of his attention than the intervals of the sport permitted; but, by running backwards and forwards for an earful at a time, contrived to master the subject sufficiently to give it as his decided opinion that the bearing of the goddess Tseery could be construed in no other sense than that of a direct offer of marriage; that she was probably at this very moment making preparations for running away with me; that I had better see what pecuniary means I had at command; and finally, that his (Mr. Sillito's) week's pay (threepence), due on Saturday, was entirely at my disposal, deducting one halfpenny (fine incurred), and another halfpenny debt of honour to Charley Bathurst).

The goddess was propitious to my prayer. On the Sunday following she turned her bright face twice, and looked for an entire second steadily in mine. It was as we sat down at the termination of the hymns. After that, I knew so well that she would do so at those times, and none other, that it seemed like a point of honour to refrain from intermediate watchings.

I was now perfectly content with the situation, and in the seventh heaven of delight. Touching the supposed project of elopement, the goddess—rather to Murrell's dissatisfaction, but with my unqualified approval—made no sign. The temple in which she dwelt, known to mankind in general as Mulberry Lodge, was so near, that I could, at rare and blessed intervals, distinguish the quick flutter of her white dress as she skipped from room to room, occasionally pausing for a moment at the window. These

apparitions I regarded as my especial property. They were, indeed, scarcely perceptible to any but love-sharpened eyes—except, perhaps, Murrell's—whose mysterious "Tseery!" often warned me a moment too late! I could also hear her singing—yes, even through the buzz of the schoolroom (when the windows were open) could I catch the precious strains, wailing over somebody's "portrait charmant."

Things were in this position, when my above-mentioned contest with Christian Bohné made that gentleman my undying foe. His hostility would have been nothing to me but for the form it took. By wiles I was too careless to detect, and never since have thoroughly understood, he contrived to win over to his confidence my small but, as I had imagined, well-selected friend, Murrell Sillito. It must have been through some mysterious fear. It was surely not in human nature to *like* Christian; and Murrell was above a bribe.

All I know is, that Master Sillito gradually cooled towards me. Whenever he could avoid me, without seeming to do it, he did. Our confidential intercourse dwindled to nothing. In the same proportion did Murrell's curious attachment to Christian augment. The boy followed him like a spaniel; and, if they happened to be apart, a mere glance from Christian across the playground would bring Murrell to his side.

Absorbed as I was in dreams of the bright one, Murrell's defection gave me no very serious grief. But how, I one day thought, if he should be treacherous enough to betray my heart-counsels to that beast Bohné? The fear was prophetic. At a later period, I knew that this was Christian's object, from the beginning. He had discovered that a secret of intense interest existed between Sillito and myself, and devoted all his natural cunning to its discovery. He succeeded. Poor Murrell confessed to his inquisitor the general story of my love, but the *name* choked him. Pressed on that material point, he led the Honourable Christian up to the black board upon which, in school-time, the fanciful designs of Euclid were wont to be drawn; thereon, with trembling, guilty fingers, inscribed the fatal word,

"TSEERY,"

and rubbed it out again in an instant.

"Tseery!" exclaimed Mr. Bohné. "What sort of game is that? Come, Master Murrell, no nonsense, or—"

There being now literally nothing more to conceal, Mr. Sillito at once added a personal description of the "game" in question, its habits and abode; and, receiving threepence from his questioner, invested the reward of perfidy in a custard tart.

"Tseery, eh?" Mr. Bohné had remarked, as they were about to part; "good, my little friend. Then I see my terrible way. I shall set Rabbit on her."

This was accompanied with a look so malignant, that Murrell, shuddering from head to foot with a nameless terror, could only open his blue eyes, and faintly re-echo:

"Rabbit!"

"I will suck his best blood!" continued the unchristian Christian. "That's for *him*."

"His b—b—best—" (This epicurism in sanguisuction shocked poor Murrell beyond further speech.)

"As for *you*, my boy, no blabbing of what I may do, or I'll roast you quietly alive, and devour you afterwards. That's a common form of correction for tell-tales in the tropics."

This did not add relish to the custard tart.

Setting "Rabbit" on her was about as explanatory as the witch's declaration that she was bound for Aleppo in a sieve, for the purpose of "doing." But Murrell possessed a clue.

A street-crossing, within fifty yards of Tweezum Hall, was presided over at this period by an elderly person who was worthy to have been the mother of the enterprising witch just mentioned. Her countenance was of a cocoa-nut hue, with yellow rings—to be exact, they were of the colour of the east skin of a python—round the most baleful eye ever seen out of a serpent's head. The body was considerably bent, a circumstance which engendered in her an intense spite against the whole human race. Nevertheless, it paid; imparting to her an air of upward supplication which, combined with the poor wretch's infirmity, drew many a sixpence into her greedy hand.

She had made her appearance, with her broom (perhaps, *upon* it, from Aleppo), about five months since, expelling, without ceremony, an imbecile old gentleman who had reigned peaceably there since crossings were invented. A faint demonstration was made, chiefly by the street-boys, on behalf of the dethroned monarch of the mire. The usurper was christened "Mother Rabbit"—none knew by whom—but it was sufficient that the name seemed to incense the old woman beyond expression, and it was accordingly applied on every favourable occasion. On the whole, however, the impression went abroad that Mother Rabbit was an individual rather to conciliate than offend, and there were not wanting persons of the better class who kept the hideous old woman in good humour by little presents, either in money or in snuff; articles which seemed to hold an equal place in her affections.

For some reason—perhaps the approximation to a certain resemblance between them in complexion and general style—Mother Rabbit, from the first, exhibited tokens of strong predilection for our honourable friend. No sooner was his lank form seen in the distance, towering over the heads of his companions, than Mistress Rabbit's whole demeanour underwent a remarkable change. Leaning on her broom till she had, so to speak, bent herself nearly straight, her fearful eyes distended to the utmost, and her toothless gums displayed in a hideous grin, she would watch his approach as if he were, to her, the only visible object in the world. If he crossed, she attended him so closely, and with so alarming a manifestation of a desire to bestow upon him still more signi-

ficant proofs of her regard, that Mr. Bohné was fain to repulse her in terms more emphatic than ambiguous. Mother Rabbit always shut herself up again, like a dirty fan, and covered away.

Christian's more privileged friends were wont to chaff him on the subject of his conquest. He took it very well; and, although he discountenanced the old hag's public demonstrations, we knew that, by alms and gracious looks furtively bestowed, he fed her lurid preference.

It came to pass that, on a certain Sunday, Desirée's place in the Lamond pew was vacant. I had not seen her flitting past her favourite window during the previous week. I remembered, with something like a heart-throb, that she had looked singularly pale and wistful last Sunday, and had kept her sweet face towards me about two seconds longer than usual. Likewise that, during the last few days, certain half-closed casements, and an unwonted air of quiet about the house, had indicated the presence of illness.

My fears were quickly realised. A neighbouring practitioner, Mr. Borehouse (of course, we called him Boreas), was accustomed to pay a periodical visit to Dr. Normicutt's, chiefly, I believe, to allow of Mrs. N.'s sticking "medical attendance" into the boys' bills. He was a burly, red-faced man, with a jovial and pleasant manner. He was fond of boys, and preferred holding his sanitary inspection in the open playground; where, surrounded by a mob of grinning patients all teeming with health, he would sit for an hour, joking, telling funny stories, and nursing one fat leg after the other, until time compelled him to depart.

On such an occasion, as Boreas, in his kindly, blusterous way, was bidding us farewell, the enthusiasm in his favour found vent in a cheer. He raised his hand quickly.

"Hush, my boys," he said, "I've a little patient not far from hence, whose best chance of recovery depends upon what no human skill seems able to procure for her, quiet, sound sleep. You are gentlemen, and good fellows—and precious noisy at your games sometimes. I say no more."

He had glanced in the direction of the Lamonds' house; but that was not necessary. I knew, somehow, that he meant Desirée. He was moving away, when I followed, and touched his sleeve.

"Is she v—very ill, doctor?" I stammered out, colouring, I was fatally aware, to the roots of my hair.

"Hallo, young fellow!" said the doctor, as if he were detecting my blush in the very act. "Why, yes, my boy, she is ill, very ill. And if you can tell us what's the matter with her, you will be a cleverer doctor than any of us."

"Perhaps—perhaps she's in love!" I blurted out.

"Why, you precious young Corydon, what do you know of such matters yet? Love, sir! Love a pudding's end!" ejaculated the doctor.

I replied with sincerity, that upon the whole I preferred a pudding's beginning; but, if I

might take the liberty, if it wasn't love, was it measles?

"She's had 'em, sir," replied Mr. Boreas, thoughtfully, "had 'em, I tell you, had 'em, had 'em," he repeated, with as much seeming earnestness as if he were addressing a brother-practitioner, though, in fact, he was deep in the case.

The school-bell then rang, and we hastened our different ways.

The mysterious illness of the beautiful French girl, whose face at church was so familiar to many of the school, became a topic of general interest. As for me, the mental anxiety I suffered was beyond description. As the days dragged on, bringing us no authentic tidings of her condition, the worst fears beset me. In the playground I dreaded to lift my eyes, lest the windows of the Lamonds' house, utterly closed, should extinguish every hope. We knew, from our own observation, that the road in front had been covered with straw, and learned in some vague manner that every means had been resorted to, to procure that life-bestowing sleep of which the doctor had spoken; but in vain.

At a shop, whose proprietor kept a Bath chair for hire, I learned further, that Desirée, having at her own request been taken out for a few minutes, and been at first greatly revived by the air and movement, was, on returning, reduced to a more distressing condition than before. This was the sadder disappointment, as the poor girl, in natural enjoyment of her improved sensations, had been in high spirits, conversing with friends she met during her little ride, and finally insisting on holding conference with Mother Rabbit herself, on the virtues and properties of snuff. Working this valuable line of information further, it turned out that old Rabbit had been for some time a pensioner of my sweet goddess in the matter of snuff—snuff alone (strange to say, she would accept from her nothing else); and nothing appeared to afford the old woman such supreme delight as flourishing under Desirée's nose a little "tabatière" with which the latter had presented her. On this occasion, Mother Rabbit, in her ecstasy at the reappearance of her young patroness, went through such exercises with her half-open snuff-box, that the invalid, sneezing painfully, had to be taken on.

The misery of suspense began, I think, at this time to affect my health. I could not sleep at night, and abhorring the playground, sat moping in the schoolroom by day. My very appetite flickered out, and I got so wan and pale, that it was no wonder that (as I afterwards heard) Mr. Bohné remarked to his confidant, Murrell:

"Didn't I tell you I would have his blood? I'm doing it."

"Hullo, Corydon," said Mr. Boreas, singling me out at his next visit, "I must have a talk with you."

He walked me down the playground, in which there were only one or two fellows, and asked me doctor's questions.

"Well, I can't see that there's much the matter with you, yet you're not right. D'ye get enough to eat?" (I nodded.) "I don't want another puzzling case on my hands," he added, looking steadily at me.

I snatched at the allusion.

"Doctor, how is Miss—Miss——"

"Lamond? Very, very ill. That is the worst we doctors say."

"Do you mean that——" My heart had given a leap, and now stood still.

The doctor's looks replied to my question.

"And I shall never, *never*, see her again!" I exclaimed; and, regardless of everything else in the world, burst into a passion of tears.

"Hallo, young——," began the astonished Mr. Boreas; but close beside us a small voice said, quietly and timidly:

"TSEERY!"

It was Murrell Sillito, who had crept up to us unnoticed, and was pointing with a trembling finger towards the well-known window. There, in very deed, was visible my poor goddess, tenderly supported between two attendants, while her mother, leaning over from behind, helped the weakened hand to wave a signal of recognition and farewell.

"That's right. Throw away her last chance. Ah! how *dare* you?" cried Mr. Boreas, shaking his clenched fist at the group. "Put her to bed, you (a-hemmed) fools! Are you trying to kill her?"

"No, no. It's *he* that's killing her; *he*," said Murrell, crying bitterly, crimson, apparently, with passion, and stamping with both his little feet, as he pointed to Christian Bohné, who was sauntering in the direction of the house. There was a mark on Murrell's temple, and one of his eyes, which I thought had been swollen by his tears, was blackening as from a blow.

"He!" repeated Mr. Boreas, bewildered. "Bohné killing my patient! What does the boy mean?"

"He is doing it; he *said* he'd do it," insisted Murrell. "He has set Rabbit on her."

"Set—Rabbit," gasped the doctor. "What do you mean *now*?"

He turned to me, but I was as much perplexed as himself. Suddenly, however, the thought of Mother Rabbit and her alleged evil eye flashed upon me, and I blurted out some intended explanation of that mystery.

"Evil eye! Evil fig's end," roared the doctor. "I think you're all gone crazy. *Now*, my friends," and, with a menacing gesture, he hurried off to the Lamonds'.

What followed I learned from other sources.

"Insisted" upon going out in the chair, ill as she was, and "insisted" upon being stuck up at the window afterwards!" exclaimed the doctor, soon after entering the house. "Why do you tell me such stuff, nurse? It was your duty to insist too."

Nurse discreetly threw upon her mistress the responsibility of explaining. Mrs. Lamond, with tears, confessed that, seeing the patient a

shade better, she had yielded to the poor child's importunate entreaties to be taken in her chair as far as the crossing—no further—then to be lifted to the window, in hopes of looking an adieu to a little boy whose face she knew.

"To the crossing, eh? Which crossing?" grunted the dissatisfied doctor. "Saint Paul's Churchyard? Mile-end? The Tower?"

"No, no. Not two hundred yards. Mother Rabbit's crossing."

"Rabbit! Mother Rab—And what happened there and then?" asked Mr. Boreas, with curious earnestness.

"My darling had her little chat with the old woman, who is a protégée of hers. Suddenly, however, she became deadly faint, and, you see," sobbed poor Mrs. Lamond, pointing towards the inner room.

"I don't see," muttered the doctor. "Once up, the air should have refreshed her. So, nothing else passed, with—with—"

"The old woman? Nothing. She gave Desirée her grateful blessing, and, as usual, exhibited the little box, full of the snuff my darling gives her."

"Did it make her sneeze?"

"Not that I remember."

"Let me see that snuff," said Mr. Boreas.

There was a packet of it in the chamber. It was fetched. The doctor rubbed, smelled, even tasted it, and finally took a mighty pinch.

"No harm *there*," he said, with decided relish, and turned to re-enter the patient's room. Suddenly pausing, he added, half interrogatively:

"These little excursions to—to the crossing seem to have been usually succeeded by an attack of this kind?"

Mrs. Lamond assented.

"I always detested that old hag," said Mr. Boreas. "She brings us bad luck. Hang me if I don't half believe the popular rumour that credits her with the evil eye!"

He went softly into the chamber, was absent about a minute, came back looking very grave, said to Mrs. Lamond, as he passed through, and as though in continuation of his last speech:

"And hang me if I don't search it to the bottom!"

And went out.

Within a few minutes a court of inquiry was being held in a back room at Dr. Normicutt's, at which were present Dr. and Mrs. N., Mr. Boreas, the Honourable Christian Bohné, Mr. Murrell Sillito, and myself. There was no charge against any one; but a mystery existed, which, Dr. Normicutt politely remarked, it must be the desire of every one present should be dispelled. He invited Mr. Bohné to explain what he had meant by saying that he would, or that he had, "set Rabbit" upon Miss Lamond? Mr. Bohné professed the wildest astonishment. Such an expression conveyed nothing to *his* mind. What upon earth did it mean? Dr. Normicutt desired Mr. Sillito to repeat what he had said.

Murrell did so. Christian roughly denied it;

but the opinion of every hearer was in favour of the child. It seemed to be moreover known that, although Mr. Bohné repulsed the old lady under the public eye, he had been more than once—nay, many times—seen talking to her by stealth. The doctor therefore exhorted him to state, at once, the object of these conversations, throwing out a good-natured hint that his doing so might only hasten the reward fairly due to any works of unobtrusive charity.

Whom the gods doom to destruction they make mad, says the classic proverb. Had Christian Bohné caught at this timely straw he might have been saved. There was nothing to contravene the doctor's suggestion. But Christian lost his temper, and, therewith, his head. He refused any explanation, complained rudely of the whole proceeding, declared that he would not remain two days longer in a house where a pupil, paid for as he was, could be subjected to such insulting treatment, and was withdrawing, with the avowed purpose of writing to Lord Kalydon, when the parlour-maid, looking a little flurried and something ruddier than common, made her appearance, and announced:

"Please 'm, Lord Kalydon!"

"Where?"

"In the doorn-room, 'm."

"In good time," said Doctor Normicutt. "See his lordship, my dear. Mr. Bohné can accompany you."

But Mr. Bohné showed no inclination to do so. His face had turned as white as its native hue permitted. He stammered something about waiting till he should be sent for, and left the room. The court of inquiry perforce adjourned. It never resumed its sittings, owing to what occurred in (to use parliamentary language) "another place."

Greetings over, Mrs. Normicutt had judged it best to mention to Lord Kalydon the incident that had occurred, and the mysterious expression, from his ward's lips, which had induced Mr. Borehouse to insist upon an inquiry. Much to her surprise, as her narrative proceeded, her visitor's face lost its jovial, not to say reckless, expression. He evinced the most eager and curious interest in the whole story (for Master Sillito had made so clean a breast of it, that my little love-story had come out in full), and, when Mrs. Normicutt concluded, rose and took his hat. His face was white with rage, and, half appalled at the effect of what she had related, Mrs. Normicutt was about to ring, for the purpose of summoning her husband, when Lord Kalydon stopped her.

"I believe, my dear madam," he said, "that I am the person to solve this enigma. Give me five minutes, during which I beg you to remain quietly here, and you shall know if my suspicions be correct. Fortunately I came in a cab, and, no doubt, unnoticed. This Mother Rabbit's crossing is at the end of the next street. Thanks, don't ring. I can find my way."

It was the dinner-hour with Mistress Rabbit,

and that lady was crouched on an adjacent doorstep, eating something from a wooden bowl. Engaged thus, she did not observe Lord Kalydon, until he stood before her. At the first sound of his voice, the wretched old hag started so convulsively that her bowl flew one way, her broom another, while she herself, cowering in an attitude of abject terror, gazed wildly up into the passion-wrought face of him who had accosted her. It was a public thoroughfare, and the dialogue was necessarily brief.

"You infernal old Jezebel! You thrice (a-hemmed) old witch, why do I find you here? What devil's games have you been playing now? How dared you follow me to England? Was not the provision I was fool enough to make to keep your cursed body and more accursed soul together dependent on your remaining in Africa? Do you know, beast, that you are a murderess, and that I can give you to the hangman."

"Give me, then!" croaked the old hag. "I done it for my boy. I nursed him in his cradle. He was the only thing, man or beast, that ever cared for me. I tried to live without him; but I couldn't. So I hid myself in the sugar-ship, and came after. They couldn't throw me overboard, though some wanted," and she shook her withered fist. "I come *here* because I can see him, even when he don't speak to me, and when he *do*—what wouldn't I do to please him, though twenty was to die? Is *she* dead?" asked the old woman, with horrible eagerness. "The poison wasn't mixed with the snuff so strong as I can do it."

"Peace, you monster," said Lord Kalydon, trembling with rage. "Another word, and I give you to the gallows. Peace, I say, for your voice might change my purpose. You have been faithful in your love to the child you nursed. For *that*, your life is safe for me. Take this" (he put something in her hand) "and begone. If, in five minutes' time, you are still found here, your blood upon your own head."

He turned, and strode away.

"I was right in my surmise," was his explanation to Mrs. Normicutt. "'Mother Rabbit' is an old acquaintance from Cape Coast Castle. She nursed my ward, that boy Christian, for several years, and was a faithful enough servant; but she had the reputation of being a witch, and her knowledge of drugs and deleterious herbs," said his lordship, laughing easily, "rendered her somehow an undesirable inmate. She was dismissed, but found her way hither. I fear that, whether purposely or not, she has mingled with the snuff given her by your kind little French neighbour some of her own compounds, harmless to herself, but perilous, even when only shaken into the air, to organs differently constituted. Every passing recognition of the lovely little benefactor was re-

warded by an invisible cloud of poison. If inquiry be considered necessary, she can be apprehended, and my testimony is at your service."

It was not considered necessary. Mother Rabbit, acting upon my lord's advice, shouldered her broom, and departed; the deposed potentate, slightly more imbecile than before, returning to his throne. No inquiry was made as to her after-residence.

Lord Kalydon carried off Mr. Bohné the same day, consoling us for his loss by obtaining for us a half-holiday.

Tseery rallied wonderfully, and within three weeks her sweet voice was again occasionally audible, her bright pale face glimmering from the window. She was not, however, allowed to go out at present. Meanwhile, the holidays inexorably drew near. I went home, thence to Sandhurst, and, in due time, with my regiment to India.

Seven years thereafter I was once more in London. Being, one Sunday morning, not far from the chapel we used to attend at school, I walked thither, and took my place, not without a glance towards the well-remembered pew. It was tenanted, as I had expected, by strangers; and it was near the close of the service when my eyes, unconsciously returning in that direction, lighted upon Desirée! One glance enabled me to see that she was ten times lovelier than ever. I could not tell if she had recognised me or not. She left the chapel leaning on the arm of a tall man who had accompanied her. Lingerer near the entry, I accosted the old pew-opener as she came out, and, after a word or two, asked, as carelessly as I could,

"So, Mademoiselle Lamond is—is married, ha?"

"Not as I've heerd on, sir," was the answer.

"But, that gentleman?"

"Oh, sir, 'tis her uncle."

I gave the old lady—she was such a *very* old acquaintance—five shillings.

And the boy's love is the man's; for Tseery is my darling and my wife.

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THE DEAR GIRL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BELLA DONNA," "NEVER FORGOTTEN," &c.

CHAPTER XI. THE DILIGENCE COMES IN.

WE have noticed Sody's, the post-house. Sody, too, was a wine-merchant, which was at the bottom of the hill going out of the town, and where the Paris diligence came in every second day, about four o'clock. The cloud of dust on the hill made Sody, sprinkling sand in a dingy den within, finish as quick as he could; and gathered lounging men and boys in the blouse uniform, and even brought faces to many windows. The sound was like that of an orchestra as the not unmusical jingling and the sonorous tramping of six horses came out of the cloud; and presently the great wain itself—piled like a mountain with men and luggage, swinging and reeling, with the driver swearing and cracking his enormous waggoner's whip, and every horse of the six leaping and tossing and plunging and doing everything but draw like its decent fellows in England—came thundering in, and pulled up with nicety in front of Sody's. It was an ark—a hotel laid on its side on wheels—it seemed to hold so much humanity. These were the Lafitte, Galliard, times. Great men talk of our railways; but the "administration" of this service was marvellous. Time was kept; rain, snow, ice notwithstanding. The great wheeled argosy was got on somehow. If forty horses were necessary, they were found; drivers and conductors were gifted men in their way. The former giants. In the ice-bound days when the country was like steel, they would flog their wild horses down the steepest hills to the music of women's shrieks from within, and to their own frightful swearing. Now a frantic brute would be down and dragged along by the rest: scourged to his feet again by that amazing whip. Those in the coupé had the hoofs of the frantic brutes on a level with their faces. The frightened English ladies at the road-corners would see pink-nosed, wild, cream-coloured Normandy horses, that had been sent by a nobleman to be put into the diligence to be broken in by that severe training. Nearly every one went by diligence to Paris. Posting had infinitely more risks, and was not so certain, and less rapid.

Here it was now come in; here was the mountain of baggage being got down—the "johndarmes," all boots and white tape, lounging by, and giving place to Mr. Blacker, who was scrutinising the passengers with an official air. They seemed a poor set enough, he thought; he could see with a glance, from long practice, their quality. As he was looking on at the confused crowd of helpless strangers—English ladies, with daughters and children, bewildered with the commissaries shouting the names of their establishments, even dragging them away—a gentlemanly-looking man, all over dust, came up to him, and said:

"You seem an Englishman, sir; and I think I saw you at the port——"

Mr. Blacker drew back a little haughtily at this style of address—"seem an Englishman, indeed!" He had noticed that the person was very dusty and shabby. No man had such a just contempt for the "shy" English.

"Possibly, sir," he answered; "I have been there; and what do you want with me?"

"I saw you with Mr. Daeres," the gentleman went on; "perhaps you could help me, as a stranger, and tell me of some quiet lodgings here. I am really hardly well enough for the bustle of a hotel."

A sick and decayed stranger—the next thing, as Mr. Blacker had a sure and certain instinct, would be the usual application in harmony with these symptoms. "My good friend, how can I tell you? I really do not know what will suit people. You must go to an agent, or walk about and look at the houses. It's not in my way at all, I assure you. God bless me, who have we here?"

A post-chaise was clattering down the little hill, with the great speckled Wooverman horses, round as dray-horses, and the picturesque post-boy jogging up and down. There was something to interest Mr. Blacker, and he darted away to play the good Samaritan. A post-chaise and luggage were like an order set in jewels. "There was no mistake" about that; there was nothing on credit here, you see—you paid as you went. It was an exceedingly costly shape of introduction. In an instant the diligence lost interest, and the blouses gathered about the newly arrived chaise. Mr. Blacker, forgetting the shabby fellow who had come in the diligence, was peering in, his hand shading his eyes, with a half smiling recognition, which

his practice of accosting mere strangers had made habitual.

He saw it was a large, full, and pink-faced gentleman in a grey travelling-cap, well drawn down, which seemed like a nightcap, and a distinguished air of wealthy portliness. Beside him was a very girl, blooming, petite, with rosy cheeks, though a little overcome with modesty at the publicity she was exciting. The dusty gentleman stood by with a little curiosity. He had seen Mr. Blacker's eagerness, and was amused. As the door was opened, the pair seemed not a little nervous at all the faces, strange, voluble, half-savage, half good-humoured, which were bent on them. Then the chorus broke out. "Go to Roy'l H'tel, my lor'!" "Take you to Wheelers, on the port, near the ships!" "Take my card, sir; the Roy'l is fall!" "Hôtel du Nord!" "Hôtel d'Angleterre!" At these invitations they seemed to be a little terrified. The dusty gentleman, still watching, was more amazed at seeing Mr. Blacker elbow his way among them all, calling loftily to the man in white tape, and boots, and huge sabre,

"Here, John Darm! make way, do; it's unbearable; the thing wouldn't be allowed in England. Do keep back. Good evening, sir; let me help you. These are only the ways of the place. This must be put down by government. I am Mr. Blacker, a resident here for many years. If I can be of any use, I shall be delighted."

"Oh, sir!" said the lady, "how kind of you! We don't know what to do. There is some mistake about our passport."

"Yes," said the pink gentleman in the travelling-cap, with an air of half terror, half worry, "it has been wrong all the way from Paris, and they have been threatening us. I am an English gentleman—Mr. Wilkinson, on our tour; and we are willing to pay, I am sure."

Mr. Blacker's face fell; he had counted on a milord, at least. Still there was wealth. His face spread out again into an universal and almost devouring smile.

"Oh! that is nothing; leave it to me. You go to a hotel, of course! The Royal I would recommend; but, of course——"

Here the chorus broke in, as that word was caught. A dozen dirty hands, holding dirty cards, were thrust out on both sides of Mr. Blacker.

"Confusion!" he said, angrily; "will you keep back?"

"Oh, thank you," said the lady, "You are so kind. We did not know *where* to go."

"Leave it all to me, then," went on Mr. Blacker, with the rapidity and promptness of a general giving orders. "You will go to the Royal. Mention my name, and Le Buff will do his best for you. Here, some one, tell Mr. Sody to come out. Dites à M. Sody d'approcher. Mr. le Chef, there is some errure here about the passport; n'est pas en règle, you see." This was addressed to an

officer in a double-horned cap with tassels, who, with a bundle of open papers in his hand, was striding towards them. The officer bowed a great deal as M. Blackhaire spoke to him privately and with great earnestness, for he, too, had the general complimentary impression that the English were in occupation of his town, and its real rulers. There was no difficulty beyond the usual conventional irregularity which the police often delighted in discovering and as readily condoned, and they graciously consented that the lady and gentleman might proceed to the Royale, where "Mr. the chief" would wait on them himself in person. Mr. Blacker announced these glad tidings to the strangers with very much the air of one who has obtained a reprieve.

"I'll see you, myself, in the morning—I will call up. I am Mr. Blacker, the secretary to the English Church here, trustee, and all that, you know, and I dare say could be of a little use to you. The authorities are fair enough. Willing to do what they can to oblige me. Here, you drive this lady and gentleman to the Royal. Good evening;" and in a profusion of grateful acknowledgments the pair were driven away.

His wife at home was surprised at the spirits in which her husband returned. Here, indeed, were the "most charming people"—"quite an acquisition"—the "best-bred air"—swans, in short, of a far darker hue than the Beauforts. So in a prolific family the newer and later baby puts the penultimate bantling "out of joint."

The dusty gentleman had seen the whole proceeding with a smile. It was "such a bit of human nature," he thought. Mr. Blacker had walked past him, his eyes seeing only airy visions, his mouth smiling at its welkin, and without even dreaming that he had seen him only a few moments before. He himself took his way home.

"I shall have to go to a dreary hotel after all," he was thinking, "to be elbowed by a cold crowd, to be sitting in public three-quarters of the day, and served as though I was one of a regiment. I can't endure it. A servant's face, even, in one of those rooms, would be something more comforting, more of the air of home."

A gentle face—almost as he spoke—that of a young girl, had come hastily out of "Chang Purdry's"—thus known to the English—a very stout artist, in a white cap and apron, and a fierce knife always in his hand. He kept a "charcuterie," and it was owned grudgingly by Captain Filby that his sausages were "uncommon good, though Heaven only knows how many cats the rascal chopped up in 'em." The young lady, coming out hastily, with a little bag in her hand, almost ran up against the traveller. She drew back with the conventional cry and start. He apologised; but stopped, and said:

"Why, Miss Lucy Dacres! is it not? You remember, I came over with your papa?"

Lucy, at the very first moment, had recalled the handsome face, the black Spanish eyes, and moustache. These things made the same impression on her as they would on any of her sisters.

"Colonel Vivian!" she exclaimed, eagerly. "Ah! so it is!" She put out her hand.

So it had been, the very first second she came out of the shop; but who can help this little worldly training?

"You have come back from Paris! Are you going to stay? Papa will be so glad!"

There was a cordiality in her greeting that touched him.

"I hardly know what I shall be able to do. I am so weary, and have gone through so much. I feel as if I were going to have an old illness back on me. But I will fight it off, if it were only," he said, smiling, "to avoid a sick-room at a hotel."

"You do look ill," she said, impetuously; "indeed you are ill. I saw it at once. You are tired and overworked. Shall I go home, and tell papa?"

"It is nothing," he said, leaning wearily against the door of the little shop. "I have gone through much worse, though I thought I should have died in that dreadful coupé. I must only fight it off, as I have often fought it off before. I meant to have gone on to-night, as I couldn't endure the hotel; and as a capital preparation, I am going on that most weary of all searches, hunting for lodgings—going upstairs here, and meeting strange bargaining faces there. It is a dreadful business, and I shrink from it."

"Oh," said Lulu, eagerly, "we could tell you of a place—a charming one—close to us. Oh, it would exactly suit you! I know it would. So quiet; and they would give the world to have a person like you with them."

He smiled. "Let us go and take them now. You are quite a house-agent, and I am greatly obliged to you. It comes so welcome, after the behaviour of a pompous Samaritan up at the diligence-office, and who quite put me aside when I asked him what I asked you."

"Mr. Blacker, I am sure," said Lucy, laughing.

Striking out of the Place, and turning up one of the streets that led away to the town, they were not long in getting to "Robert's," the house with a court—the only one in that quarter—near where the Dacres lodged. On the way was the old church, a yellow, Normandy pile, rough and jagged, and with a humped effect about its old shoulders, which, when lit up at night with its tall ragged window, its bent stained-glass, its grand stone disorder, its luxurious rankness of carved and shaken extravagance, seemed like an old mediæval shrine out of the Hôtel Cluny. For of nights it was often lit up while official evening service was going on—some little pastoral rite to which no one need go, but to which every one that passed turned in for a few minutes; it might be to see the pretty fishing-girls, who were to walk in procession in a few weeks.

Robert's was a neat, comfortable clean place—had been considered even handsome in old days, when one of Louis the Sixteenth's intendants had lived there. The court was a great feature. Down in the Great-street it would have brought three times the rent—an addition that would have been very welcome to the hard-working couple who owned it.

Exactly opposite to where the Dacres lodged was a little archway and court, and at the corner of the court a small shop. It was kept by a young pair, newly married, who had waited what seemed to them an eternity; and at last, in despair of any hope of things bettering, had plunged desperately, and, with a little aid from friends, who were watching them ("Harcourt Dacres, Esq., a napoleon"), had started this little establishment. Once embarked, they worked frantically, for the liability hanging over them was tremendous; and people noticed the handsome young boy of a husband sawing blocks of wood on the little X-shaped frame all day and night in a manner that would put to shame any gentleman associated with the milling interest, whether living on the Dee or elsewhere. The young wife laboured away within at washing; for they strove in a hundred ways to make out the dreadful sum required by a severe landlord; but their grand dependence were the "apartments," which had let but indifferently during the past season. Lucy was deeply concerned for the struggle of these her protégés, and had seen their young and handsome faces growing every day more wistful and contracted with anxiety and responsibility, and her delight at being able to help them in this house-agency way overcame all diffidence about speaking so intimately to a stranger. She led him in triumph to the house. She found the pair more wistful and anxious still, going over their accounts in a sort of council. She brought joy and hope with her, and almost danced with delight as she saw their brightening faces. The rooms were pretty, bright, clean, and cheerfully furnished.

She went over to tell her father, who, she knew, would be overjoyed, and found him in one of his most buoyant moods.

"A party, Lulu, my chirrup," he called out. "A little gaiety for you. The swells are on view to-night at Mother Dalrymple's; and Blacker's the showman. He can't keep me in his menagerie, as he does the herd. I never mind him. Go nicely dressed, pet; your little white simple frock; and we'll be neat as ninepins. Poor mamma here will mope at home."

Then Lucy told her adventure. "The handsome man has come back, papa, and is going to stay opposite. Such a face, Harco dear, like the old Spanish cardinal we saw in the Museum! I could study it like a picture. He's worth all the Frenchmen here."

"Witch!" said her father, with his "fond" manner. "Nice training I've given you at Miss Pringle's—bringing off gentlemen with Spanish faces to lodgings opposite, and have 'em convenient for study. Ah, my young lady, if

I had you ten minutes in the witness-box——” Then, seeing some disturbance and alarm in her face at this matter-of-fact picture of what she had done, he added: “Don’t mind, Lulu love; it’s only the way I’d leave it to the jury, supposing they ever put me on a bench—that is, supposing the sky to come down upon us one day. Though God help us before a jury of this place—virgins or matrons. I tell you what, I’ll just run over and see our friend. It’s only polite, you know—a poor stranger in the place, without a friend. And I tell you what, too, we’ll bring him off with us to the divarshion to-night, and my Lulu can study his Spanish face to her heart’s content.”

“No, no,” said she, gravely, “we must not disturb him, Harco dear. He wants to be quiet, and looks very ill.”

“The yellow Spanish tone, my dear,” said he, in high good humour. “You took it for jaundice. I’ll bring him, canvas, frame, and all. Who knows, pet, but we may have him laughing in your room before long, ha! ha!—by a red cord, ha! ha!”

This shape of jest began to trouble Lucy a good deal. When her father was in spirits, and he had got hold of what he thought was a “good thing to work,” she knew there was no restraint. As he said, he made the punch boil with anything that came handy, even with what might affect his darling Lu’s most tender sensibilities.

“Now you must promise me,” she said, gravely, and as though she were lecturing a younger brother, “not to be saying that sort of thing before strangers. You know, dear, the set of people that are here, and how unkindly and unscrupulously they speak.”

He became grave. “What was I called to the bar for? Tell me that. What do the attorneys come to me for? Is there a man among all those rascals in the “stuff”—and there isn’t a better-hearted lot in the world than on circuit—is there one of ’em, I say, can take a case lightly and gingerly over a hole just covered with a few rotten sticks and a little grass, maybe? Ah! Dacres is the coachee they want for nice tender driving like *that*—eh?” And he seemed to wait a reply to this “poser,” which, had it been addressed privately to that large-hearted circuit where he was so popular, would have been answered in a fashion directly opposite to what he anticipated; for in delicate parts of a case it was notorious his rough indiscreet driving was sure to send everything through.

In such a humour remonstrance was useless, and Lucy saw him gaily cross the street—a boy carolling pleasantly—to invade the premises opposite. Then Lucy saw, with a little alarm, many such crossings.

CHAPTER XII. THE PARTY.

On the first floor of the milliner’s shop—“Ong ho” at Mrs. Dalrymple’s—was some agitation. A few friends were coming that night. Here was one of those little parties which people, apologising for the place, said was the

real charm of Dieppe. There was no fuss, no constraint, no elaborate preparation; you were glad to see your friends—so different from the way at home. Suppers, balls, music, splendid dresses, lights—the grand apparatus of festivity—were absent; and their absence was made a positive merit of. Who shall blame this ingenious shift? It was impressed over and over again on the wealthy, who, alas! could stay but a day or so.

The little rooms were cleared a good deal. The good lady, the hostess, enjoying in that strange place the respect which decency and conscience and fair conduct extort from those who have long bid adieu to these virtues, was busy with her preparations, which, as she had not left behind in her native land a good warm hospitality, were liberal. Many called this foolish as they enjoyed it. Below there was kept carefully apart, to be brought in at the proper time, browned delicacies, fowls, galantines, with other things of the same substantial family, prepared under personal superintendence, each the best of its kind, and chosen with skill. Blessings on such kindly purveyors! They usher in their little restoratives towards midnight with a pleasant surprise, which we welcome more than the ostentatious dainties served at the official splendours of a ball.

But at the last moment, just as they were lighting the candles, the little milliners below all assisting with delight, here was Blacker’s heavy step on the stair, this panting figure stalking up, and actually making the good lady of the house nearly drop one of the wax-lights.

“My dear madam, see here! Such a thing has turned up, and I haven’t lost a moment coming off to you. The nicest pair! Just come! I sent ’em to the Royal at once. The *best* people, and no mistake at all! She of the highest, tip-top connexion. Where are the girls, with the pen and ink? Just fill in something nice—‘request the pleasure,’ and all that.”

There was a pleased agitation invading the happy hostess, a flurry not at all undelightful. The girls clustered from all quarters and crowded about her.

“Dear, dear,” said their mamma, smiling, “where *shall* we put them all? But what’s the name, Mr. Blacker?”

“Wilkinson—Mr. Wilkinson and his wife,” said the girls.

“Now fold it up,” said Mr. Blacker. “I’ll take it myself; in fact, I told them I would show them a little of our quiet society. I saw they liked it. Oh, first-rate people—maid and man in the rumble, and all that. See here, Mrs. Dalrymple—this confidentially—I’ll bring them about half-past eight; not earlier, you know. They are accustomed to the London ways. ‘Pon my word, very nice,” he added, looking round; “very nice, indeed!”

Before eight o’clock that night there was near a dozen people assembled in these little rooms, which looked cozy and inviting enough, though Captain Filby (present in a pink under-

waistcoat) was very pleasant about "a band-box," and ceiling pressing on your head. He was growling to young Chaytor in the corner: "Why didn't she hire a garson or two from the hotel—the beggars would have been glad of a franc at this time—to roar names up the stairs? This good woman will be going round to Sody and the rest of them: 'My dear Mussier Sody, I am so sorry, but next month or so I expect a remittance;' and all that. So it's Sody and the other rascals who *really* pay for all this—these wax-lights and all."

There also was M. Pigou, the handsome pastor—already retired into a corner, as into an arbour, with the handsome daughter of the house, his dark eyes "reading hers," as he thought, with an exquisitely hopeless sense of being misunderstood and unintelligible to the whole world. Here was Doctor White, the gay unmarried doctor; but not Doctor Macan. We can hear Mrs. Dalrymple explaining this with nervous anxiety, as though she were a diplomatist.

"You know, Doctor White is our friend, and was recommended to us, and is as agreeable a young man as ever I met. I asked Mr. Macan, but he wrote me back such a stiff, angry letter, saying he wouldn't go into the same room with the other, and that I must have known that. Really, I am not accustomed to be lectured in that way about my little parties. I shall never trouble him again. But not a word to Mr. White; it would only spoil his pleasure for to-night."

But the gentleman alluded to was, of course, in full possession of all the whole transaction, and was "winning golden opinions" by the easy and pleasant way he took it—a nice, pleasant, good-tempered young fellow, and desirous to succeed. No wonder! for he spoke in the magnanimous way of Doctor Macan. No man more admired his abilities than he did. He thought it a little unfair and ungenerous in one of Doctor Macan's standing to try and keep back one in the profession. So far it had not succeeded. The young ladies said Mr. White—it was agreed tacitly that he should not be called "Doctor"—was so good-looking.

This little episode was most valuable, and, later, furnished the colony with interesting whispers and speculations for several days. But in a moment this little scandal was absorbed in the grander interest of the arrival of the distinguished guests, Mr. Blacker coming on before and plunging into the room, looking eagerly round, and seizing Mrs. Dalrymple by the wrist, to bring her to meet this grand stranger. It was a procession; Guernsey Beaufort, a London club man, superbly gracious, laying himself out, as it were, you see, to suit himself to this sort of thing. Indeed, he had a good-naturedly amused look as he turned his eyes a little way up to the low ceiling. Mrs. Beaufort, gentle and even sorrowful, all her finery hopelessly betraying her inferior origin, and that she had been married for money. The younger Beaufort's scornful contempt for the

people and the place—constitutional and involuntary—his unconcealed weariness, his openly careless explanation that "Guernsey insisted on bringing him," and that he was counting the minutes till he got back to town, were tokens there were no mistaking; a gulf was all around him, separating him from the canaille, and he was on a rock in the middle.

Our Lucy had come early by herself; that is, attended through the Dieppe streets by the little maid who waited on her. That was almost a not unpicturesque and even theatrical sight—the lights twinkling in the shops over the wares, that seemed like gold and silver, and the lamp swinging overhead from lines. At times, when the night was wild, the sullen drone of the sea close by came round the corners. Her father was to drop in later. She was a little excited; it was her first amusement of the kind since she had been manumitted. She looked pretty and attractive. Young Mr. White grew distraught talking to the Miss Dalrymples, as he looked over to her. Other eyes, bent on her from a retired corner, were watching her with less complacency. For a time, Lucy, pleased with the lights—and your true entrepreneurs of these little private shows know that light can supply furniture, glitter, magnificence, everything, if it be but turned on in abundance—she was charmed with the festive dresses and the "company manners," all new to her. Thus engrossed, it was some minutes before she saw Miss West's staid face bent on hers, watching grimly and fixedly from a corner. Lucy darted over to her.

"I am so glad we meet here. Isn't it pretty and charming? And I feel as if I was going to enjoy myself. Where is Mr. West? He's coming later?"

"No; he is not coming. He had business at home."

"Not coming?" cried Lucy; "how strange of him! He always goes out with you, does he not?"

"I see you are here by yourself," said the other, quietly; "but I don't think it odd of you. My brother has letters to write."

"Nonsense," said Lucy, gaily; "tell him, from me, I don't believe his excuses. His letters would keep well enough till morning, if he would put his thoughts in water, like flowers."

"I should not venture to give him any message of that sort," said Miss West, with great coldness, "though I am his sister. I should not dare to look for any reasons more than such as he chooses to give me."

Lucy, in a sort of speculative way, her eyes seeming to work out the conclusion:

"Then I'll tell him, for I am privileged to say what I please to him. This is some deep plan or policy. I am sure he is working some scheme. He is so clever, you know; and when he does anything out of the usual course, he has some end in view."

"I shall tell him all these compliments, you may be sure," said Miss West, looking at her.

"I am asking you to tell him," said Lucy, gravely.

Mrs. Dalrymple came up with her friendly manner. "I am so glad you have come, for they all said we were sure not to have you as Mr. West did not come, and as you never went anywhere without him. I could tell you the funny reasons that wicked Captain Filby has been giving for it."

Lucy looked down at Miss West in her corner with a quick intelligence, as though something had occurred to her mind for the first time; but at the same instant Mr. Blacker came plunging and striding at Mrs. Dalrymple, grasped her wrist, and dragged her to the door, with an agitated "Here they are! Come over, quick."

Such a surprise for the company, even extorting an impatient "Who the d—! have we here now?—Blacker losing the half-pint of wits he had," from Captain Filby. The tall, pink-faced, pluffy squire, with that country-looking girl on his arm. Guernsey Beaufort's brother put up his glass, and seemed interested. She had a delighted smile of half pleasure, half confusion. People were not trained well enough at Dieppe to go on talking; but every one stopped in a death-like silence, and stared, and gaped.

Only Mr. Blacker was heard in fluent spasms: "Mrs. Dalrymple, allow me—Mr. Wilkinson—Mrs. Wilkinson. I thought, Mrs. Dalrymple, I might venture to ask for a card for our friends."

"I am delighted," the hostess replied. "I hope you are not fatigued. Here, dear, get Mrs. Wilkinson a seat."

Then followed great disturbance, and rustling and unsetting, and the pretty bride, for such she was, overwhelmed with confusion, was duly seated. Mr. Blacker "lashed himself" (Captain Filby's remark) firmly alongside of the pink squire and pretty stranger, and took care very minutely and unnecessarily to give the details of their meeting, that all the room should learn his title to the possession and manipulation of the stranger. They were his by the laws incident to jetsam and flotsam. That title was always honourably acknowledged in the colony. "And Lady Mary Wilkinson," added Mr. Blacker, very loud, "I hope we may soon be ordering rooms for her."

A greater bustle still when Mrs. Dalrymple with pride leads forward Guernsey Beaufort's brother, who had asked to be made known to Mrs. Wilkinson. He at once drops into a seat beside her, takes possession of her, is observed to make her smile and giggle even, with grave observations delivered in a mysterious way, looking at her askance as he spoke. It was soon remarked that Mrs. Wilkinson had made quite a conquest of Mr. Guernsey Beaufort's brother.

A cheerful voice on the stairs, and Lucy interrupted herself, calling in great spirits to the pastor, who approves of her, and has been telling her that there are at most but

two people in the world who understand him, or ever will understand him:

"Here's dear old Harco at last."

Yes! here he was, talking and laughing up the stairs, and leading in by the arm the handsome stranger—the Spanish face—and revealing to the terrified Mr. Blacker, who gave something like a groan of agony, the dusky stranger who had mistaken him for a Samaritan up at Sody's. But he was now resplendent, fresh, clean, delicate-looking perhaps, attracting all eyes. Beside him, even the glitter of Guernsey Beaufort's brother seemed to fade. Tailoring is to be had cheaply enough, in one sense, by all indiscriminately; but the true air, the carriage, is not to be so bought. Mr. Blacker's penultimately distinguished strangers seemed to fall back. Mr. Dacres, as much at home as if he were at the circuit recess, did the introduction.

"I've brought a friend, Mrs. D. We were dining together, so I thought I might. He and I are old friends—of certainly a fortnight's standing. Ha! ha! Met twice, once in the packet—ah! There's my Lulu's face, hiding like a rose among the bushes. Our little Samaritan, eh, Colonel Vivian? You and I know the meaning of that."

Lucy had gone forward to meet him. "Charming Samaritan!" he said, smiling; "not a Levite who would stop for nobody except in a post-chaise."

"Oh, oh!" said Mr. Dacres, full of suppressed enjoyment. "Let me introduce you. Mr. Blacker, Colonel Vivian."

Blacker, dreadfully taken aback, could only murmur, "Really, so sorry; quite a mistake, Colonel Vivian. Looking out for some friends expected; came up at the same moment, you see."

"Friends! Surely not," said the colonel, good humouredly; "not the people in the post-chaise? I envied them so much, as they seemed strangers, and you volunteered your services. Rather hard on me, who asked you first."

"See here, Colonel Vivian," Mr. Blacker said, tapping him confidentially, as if to draw him aside into a corner, where he would be told something to his advantage. "I am so sorry about this little mistake. But we will go together, tomorrow, to a charming little bijou of a place—a pet corner that I have kept specially for you."

"For me? No, thanks. I am provided for most delightfully close to Mr. Dacres here—Hôtel Robert."

Mr. Blacker knew the place. This was a fresh blow. People standing about knew in an instant that something was going on to the disadvantage of Mr. Blacker, though they were ignorant of details; and he seemed to fall that night like the funds in a panic.

"So you are better?" said Lucy. "Oh, you are looking so much better. And I am sure you like that dear little pair. You will find them willing."

"That is everything," said he, "in everybody. You are willing!"

"Stupid, perhaps, but willing," said she. "But you don't look ill," she added. "I don't think you were very bad; or have they cured you?"

"At this moment," he said, "I am literally in agony. If I was in an open field, with no one near, I should like to give a good shriek."

"But that would do you no good," said Lucy, gravely. "It would be better, would it not, to have gone to bed, or have sent for Doctor Macan?"

"All the Doctor Macans in the world could do me little good. If he can cure India and Jamaica, and the remains of swamp fever flutter about one's head like bats at night! But I am past the time when I should want to be interesting. Seriously, I am glad to be where I am, to know there is a friendly face in the window over the way. I know nothing about friendly faces, nor never shall. Just come to one side, Miss Lucy—that is your charming name—to this wall. Every one seems to be staring so, and listening, I believe. That's better. No, I know nothing about friendly faces."

"But," said Lucy, warmly, "this is all very wrong, and all your own fault, if you won't be angry with me for telling you so. Papa says we can do all that for ourselves. He says," she added, smiling, "we have only to sow friends, and they will come up like a turnip crop about you."

"I tried all that over and over again. I might sow broadcast, but nothing came up for me. I gave the world a good and a fair chance. It never gave me one; but I don't complain."

"Friends are made so easily," said Lucy. "Oh, you don't know how easily. Some have been made in a minute—at first sight—as—as—" She stopped, tried to look grave, then smiled.

"—As our friendship, I hope, will be," he said, gravely; "unhappily, I must come this road very often, and I shall keep on my pretty little rooms always."

"It was not *that*," said Lucy, impetuously. "Only we should be so sorry, and papa likes you."

"Does he?" said the other, smiling.

"But," she went on, "why should you be on this road always, like the Jew? No one is obliged to travel backwards and forwards between Paris and Dieppe." He bowed.

"That is my destiny, all the same. I am sorry I cannot tell you the story. If you knew it, you would say I was right in keeping it locked up in my own dark jail. I have no pleasure in making others sympathise, and it will all end one day. Come, what are they about now—cards?"

Little tables, baize covered, were being drawn out, and candles arranged.

"Cards!" Mr. Ernest Beaufort was heard to say to the lady he had never deserted during the whole evening. "Good Heavens! are we in a country town?"

Mr. Guernsey was more tolerant. It was he, indeed, that had proposed a snug game.

"Whist!" said Mr. Beaufort; "they should send a bellman round, and collect all the old maids of the town!"

CHAPTER XIII. LUCY'S NEW FRIEND.

THE hostess and her daughters did not relish this serious interruption to their little festivity. It brought silence; but as it was impetuously supported by Mr. Blacker in hoarse stage-whispers—he himself dragging out tables, offering to send home for cards—there was no opposing it. Mr. Beaufort—who had taken very kindly to the clergyman, and said, loud enough to be overheard, that he was charmed with his easy manners, and that any one could tell *he* had been in the best set—declared that he must have Mr. Wilkinson in his game.

Lucy had been looking on quite downcast at the turn things had taken.

"Oh, I am so sorry," she said. "We are going to be moped, now. The party is over, and you may wish us all good night, Colonel Vivian. Oh, if they had only made a round game! A round game is heaven!"

"And why not a round game?" he said. He never was tired of watching the natural play of expression in her face. "It is not so difficult to get up a round game as to get to heaven."

To her surprise, he went forward, and said, loud enough to be heard by the room (the distinguished, the *really* distinguished stranger was speaking):

"This will be all very dull for the young ladies; they will not be let to talk or gossip. Some one has proposed a round game; it will be merrier, and take every one in, and far better."

A handsome stranger, looking round for the support of the ladies, was not likely to be left alone.

"Oh yes!" cried Lucy, "a round game!"

"Now listen to my Lulu!" said Mr. Daeres, to whom the proposal was a welcome relief, for he was already thinking of "taxing my friend Vivian's generous heart."

The adhesion to the proposal was unanimous. Mr. Wilkinson, a timid man, nervous at his responsibilities—he was to have played with Mr. Ernest as partner, and Mr. Guernsey Beaufort against him—the thing was put aside at once. Blacker was as impetuous against as he was for it.

"Dear, good lady, can't you see they don't want it?" he whispered.

The Beauforts, looking darkly at the author of their defeat, had to give up their pleasant evening's amusement.

The round game then set in. It was the one with the ungracious name—the old rude libel on that gentle sisterhood who prefer to be single. It was then new, and was played uproariously. Mr. Ernest alone declined to join, and sat apart with the lady he distinguished. His remarks, during breaks of silence, were borne to the players.

"We are going back to our school-days again. We might as well be in the curate's house on holiday night. We ought to have blindman's buff next."

Some one was dealing, and there was a silence; when Mr. Vivian's voice was heard:

"The pleasantest sight I ever saw was a game of blindman's buff, which we had one Christmas at Lord Langley's, Governor-General of India. He played himself, and his wife, the commander-in-chief, and a young duke who was travelling. So, if we do clear away the tables by-and-by, we have some precedent for it."

This was an answer to Mr. Beaufort's remark, and yet it seemed merely accidental.

The game was done. There was a pleasant clinking outside. The hospitable lady was busy moving in and out. Presently entered trays, jingling musically. The fragrance of the browned French fowls was borne on the air. Captain Filby was softened, and abated his eternal growl, to say that this was the only sensible thing he had seen since he came into the place.

Blessings, we may say again, on those honest purveyoresses whose delight is to set down something good and appetising, who do not disdain personal service in the kitchen, and who enjoy it themselves in seeing you enjoy it.

In a minute they were all sitting round with alacrity.

"Mr. Vivian! not going away?" the hostess said, in alarm. "You'll offend me."

"A thousand thanks," he answered, "for the most cheerful evening I have spent for years."

"What! must you go away?" said Lucy, her face showing her disappointment—that face which expressed all she felt without restraint—"after your engaging to stay?"

"You are afraid about your protégés," he said, smiling. "They shall not suffer. But I am like the Jew; I may not tarry long in one place. It will be the better. But this is not in my way. Indeed, I have no business to be here."

"Come here, Miss Lucy; what do you say to this?—Colonel Vivian leaving us just as we are only beginning!"

"I will not allow it," said she. "Don't go away yet, Colonel Vivian. I found you a lodging to-day—a good Samaritan you called me—and now you must let me find you food, meat, and wine."

"I am helpless here," he said, but sat down next to Lulu.

Then that pleasant little meal commenced. The browned French fowls vanished utterly, as though they had taken wings and flown away. Our colonists had not fared so substantially for long. (Was this the secret of the respect "the Widow Dalrymple" enjoyed?) Captain Filby said it was like old England again—"the dear old country we all love so much, but somehow won't live in." The Beaufort gentlemen were discontented.

"A cabin in England," said Mr. Ernest, "before a palace in this wretched hole."

Colonel Vivian was looking on him with hostile disgust.

"The French are a very fair sort of people, in their way," said Mr. Blacker, patronisingly, "but, of course, as compared with the English——"

"I should never think of comparing them, even," said Mr. Beaufort.

"We ought to revive the old vulgar theory," said Vivian, in perfect good humour, "and lay down, once for all, that one Englishman is equal to half a dozen Frenchmen."

"So he is," said the other, getting red, "any day! He'd thrash a dozen of them at a time—a set of dirty, swindling, soup-eating fellows. One of our Guardsmen would eat a dozen of them for breakfast."

Vivian laughed with real heartiness. "You won't be angry," he said, trying to be grave, "but really I have read and heard that there were people who held this view, but I always thought it was a joke. Now I can say I have really seen and heard a person say it. I am quite glad. It is something to have lived for."

This was said with such perfect sincerity and satisfaction, that the ladies tittered, and Lucy involuntarily clapped her hands, and cried out: "Oh! how very good! how funny!" And such is the force of genuine earnestness and true seriousness, on the stage or off, that every one looked eagerly at Mr. Beaufort, as if he were a real curiosity.

The gentleman coloured.

"I don't see your joke," he said. "I don't follow it at all."

But every one the next day was telling "a good thing" that happened last night, and the fun they had, and how the handsome English colonel—whom that artful, quiet girl, Lucy Daeres, had got hold of ("I heard her say, do you know, she was his good Samaritan")—had thoroughly shut up that stuck-up young swell, Beaufort.

Lucy often thought of that night later—"her first party." It seemed such a pleasant scene. She was delighted with her new friend. There was something in his voice—a strange interest. He was different from the hard, selfish, pushing crowd about her. His manner to her was charming. She was a school-girl; she had not learned the regimental drill of her senses. And some ladies, with an amused air, pointed out to each other the open delight with which she listened and looked at her sad and handsome Englishman.

A stiff cold face had noted carefully everything of this behaviour the whole night. The owner of it grew more stiff, grim, and unsocial every moment. The "remarkable" people always said she was the greatest oddity in the place. And on to-night she would neither play at cards nor eat nor drink; which unsocial vice offended the good hostess in her nicest point. She still kept in her corner. Lucy was quite unconscious of this observation, and came over now and again to her with that friendly confidential manner which attracted so many friends

to her. She was received in the same cold and hostile way; making her wonder, just once:

"How shall I ever learn to like her? But I must try. I am afraid she dislikes me."

It was at last time to go. The party broke up. Lucy, not a little excited by the night, and with eyes dancing in her head, was a little chilled by the stiff face which she saw close to her, and the hostile eyes. "How she must dislike me!" she thought. "So different from every one else here." Still she went over to her once more.

"Good night, dear Miss West," she said; "and tell Mr. West, from me, I shall come and scold him for shutting himself up."

"I am glad he was not here; though I wished him to come."

The French window gave a noisy clatter, for the wind had been rising during the night. Lucy heard it suddenly sweep down the street, and accepted this as Miss West's reason. But there was a musical voice at her ear.

"Your papa is going now," he said. "As you have done so much for me, I am going to ask to be allowed to go with you. I am a helpless stranger here."

"Of course," Lucy said, in her eager way; "we brought you, and we take you away, and know your new house is opposite ours."

Miss West heard all this, though she was looking another way, took an abrupt good night of her hostess, and departed.

"She seemed offended," the lady of the house said, talking over the party with delight to her girls. "Such odd, blunt manners! I'll never have her here again without her brother. Mr. Beaufort asked, was she a governess?"

Pleasant walk home for the trio, though the French wind had risen, and was sweeping very boisterously round the corners. At that little port they were often reminded of their tremendous neighbour, the sea, lying behind the cliffs rolled up in his mantle, always sulky, and too often bursting out into fearful and savage paroxysms.

The home was but half a street off. There was but one or two hack vehicles in the whole place.

"This is what I like," said Mr. Dacres, gaily. "It makes me feel like a five-year-old. Oh, it's nice, this, when people see each other. Only it seems absurd breaking up in this way. Why, the night's young yet; and our boys on circuit would be just settling snugly into their chairs, and sending the word down to Harcourt Dacres to give 'em 'The light of her eyes,' or 'As a beam.'"

"I've had a pleasant evening, too, and am all the better for it; and I must thank Miss Lucy for it. I shall think of it often when I am the Wandering Jew again."

When he was gone, Mr. Dacres looked after him.

"As nice and gentlemanly a fellow as ever I met with, on or off circuit. I will say that for him. There's the true touch in his bearing and demeanour, Lulu, love. You like him, Lu, love. I don't wonder you do."

"Oh, I do, papa; that is, I feel for him; for he says he has some trouble hanging over him that may haunt him all his life, and that he has no friendly faces, or people to be kind to him. I so pity these poor lonely creatures that go knocking about the world with a weight of sorrow."

"'I have a silent s'row here,'" said her father, half chanting at the moon. "Just like the poor woman in the play. Well, pet, but what will you do with him?"

"I have a little plan, Harco dear. You must be as kind and attentive to him as you can, and drive these sad thoughts out of his head. He says he must go and travel, but we must not let him."

"Ah, rogue, rogue!" said her father, laughing. "What a head it has! Oh, the girls, the girls! Yes. Try and keep him here. I dare say you'd do more than papa, in your little way. You'll soothe him, never fear."

"Oh, he's charming, Harco; and the way he put down that vulgar young fellow! I admired him so for it. And I have been laying out such plans about him, which we must talk over. He was quite depressed when he came, Harco dear. I thought he would have fallen in the street up there at the diligence. And you see how cheerful he has gone home. Didn't he, papa?"

"Like a bridegroom off to his wedding," said her father, absently. "That was your doing."

"Well," said Lucy, doubtfully, "do you know, I was thinking it might be. It's hardly vanity to say so. In fact, he told me nearly as much. Oh, Harco dear, I should feel such a pride if I could do a little good in that way, and turn people from being miserable into being happy. It makes me wretched to see people wasting their precious lives pining away, wasting in despair, when they might be enjoying everything in this dear charming world. It's like converting the unbelievers, dear, isn't it?"

"Like yourself, Lulu. But," added he, gravely (she didn't see his sly look), "we have another great conversion on hand, love. We mustn't forget *that*."

"Oh no," said she; "but Mr. West and I understand each other perfectly."

"That job's done, eh, Lulu? Well! good night, love. Oh, these girls!"

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

THE LIFE OF A METHODIST PREACHER.

ON a summer morning, in the year 1715, Silas and Dulcibella Told, the children of the doctor of a Guineaman, were wandering about Kingswood, hand in hand, like the pretty babes in the ballad. Their father, a speculative Bristol physician—who had ruined himself by building a wet dock at the Limekilns, Clifton, and then gone to sea as doctor to a slave, and there died—had brought these children up in a religious way; their mother, the daughter of a Devonshire sea-captain, had also filed their

minds with religious feelings, so that the two children were in the habit of spending all their time in the fields, picking wild flowers, looking for mushrooms, and sitting under the wild rose-bushes "conversing about God and happiness," and "so transported with heavenly bliss" (we use the exact words of one of them in after life), that whether they existed in the body or out of the body they could not tell. Their talk, about God and paradise and the Promised Land, was interrupted with hunts after dragon-flies, scrambles for flowers, wondering watchings at the flashing of the trout in the brooks, and the plucking of daisies for chains. Now and then the bark of a fox, or the blaring of a badger, filled them with an indescribable dread of being devoured by wild beasts. At last they ran and ran till they got among the trees and lost the path, then they sat down together, and kissed each other and cried; for they would never see home again, but starve, and pine, and die, and be covered over with leaves by the robin redbreasts, like the children in the wood, for whom they had so often cried their little hearts out. But the little grave boy soon aroused himself to comfort his sister, and bid her trust in God; and just at that moment a large dog appeared, sent, they had no doubt, by Heaven, and drove them, without barking, out of the wood into the real road home. In Mr. Told's own words (for the grave little boy in after life grew up into one of the Reverend Mr. Wesley's most zealous preachers, and became a noble-hearted visitor at Newgate): "When we looked round us to behold the dog, he was not to be seen. Being heedless, and unapprehensive of any further danger, we wandered again into the woods, and were a second time bewildered, and in greater perplexity than before; when on a sudden, looking around us, we beheld the same dog making towards us, till he came directly up to us; and we being much terrified ran from him, till we got a second time into our knowledge; nor did the dog leave us till we were driven by him where we could not possibly run into any more labyrinths. I then turned about to look for the dog, but saw no more of him, although we were upon an open common. This was the Lord's doing, and it was marvellous in our eyes."

In the year 1719, when seven years old, little Silas Told, who never forgot those first impressions, was put into Mr. Colson's Hospital, on St. Augustine's Back, near the Quay, Bristol. This school for one hundred boys had cost eleven thousand pounds building. Its founder was one of those fine old merchants of Queen Anne's time, who gave away money with a divine liberality, and devoted his life to generous and noble works of goodness. Mr. Told, who, when a boy, was present at the public funeral of this great philanthropist, has left an interesting sketch of his history. He was the son of Edward Colson, a journeyman soap-boiler, whose wages did not exceed ten shillings per week, and had ten children then living, of whom Edward was the eldest.

When he had arrived to an age fit to be put out an apprentice, his father bound him to a Virginia captain. He behaved so well as cabin-boy, that, before his ship departed from America for England, he had acquired, by presents from passengers, the sum of fifty pounds; and, being of an exceeding liberal disposition, on his arrival at Bristol he dispensed every farthing to the prisoners at Newgate, and shortly after sailed again to Virginia. On his second return, he disposed of a sum twice as large after the same manner. He gradually grew in wealth till he became an East India merchant (before the Company started). Forty sail of stately ships obeyed his bidding, and wealth flowed in upon him from every quarter of the globe. His charities were kingly. Mr. Told relates two remarkable anecdotes of Mr. Colson's benevolence, and his dread of its being in any way thwarted.

"One of his ships, trading to the East Indies, had been missing for upwards of three years, and was included in the number of those that were destroyed at sea; but at length she arrived, richly laden. His principal clerk brought him the report of her arrival, and of the riches on board; to which he gave answer, that as she was totally given up for lost, he would by no means claim any right to her; therefore ordered the ship and her merchandises to be sold, and the produce thereof to be applied towards the relief of the needy, which directions were immediately carried into execution.

"Another singular instance of his tender consciousness for charity was: at the age of forty, when he entertained some thoughts of changing his condition, he paid his addresses to a lady; but being very timorous lest he should be hindered in his pious and charitable designs, he was determined to make a Christian trial of her temper and disposition, and therefore one morning filled his pockets full of gold and silver, in order that if any object presented itself in the course of their tour over London-bridge, he might satisfy his intentions. While they were walking near St. Agnes church, a woman in extreme misery, with twins in her lap, sat begging; and as he and his intended lady were arm in arm, he beheld the wretched object, put his hand in his pocket, and took out a handful of gold and silver, casting it into the poor woman's lap. The lady, being greatly alarmed at such profuse generosity, coloured prodigiously; so that when they were gone a little further towards the bridge foot, she turned to him and said, 'Sir! do you know what you did a few minutes ago?' 'Madam,' replied Mr. Colson, 'I never let my right hand know what my left hand doth.' He then took his leave of her, and for this reason never married to the day of his death, although he lived to the age of eighty-three. In the year 1721 he died at Mortlake."

The month of July, 1725, was the end of Master Silas Told's golden age of childhood. The cold daybreak began; the frosty outer world came upon him as suddenly as it does on

those landscapes, that when you take them away from the fire-heat, change to snowy grey from April green. The poor little son of the bankrupt doctor was bound apprentice to the seas (at the usual premium from Colson's school of ten pounds) to Captain Moses Lilly, and he sailed from Bristol in the ship the Prince of Wales, in the pleasant month aforesaid, for Jamaica. A religious quick boy, fresh from a gentle home, and six years in a good and almost monastic school, taken from good food and kind friends, he was hurried off to rough, stern, brutal masters, to be sea-sick for months, and all that time sworn at and beaten for his unfoward awkwardness. It seemed to him that he had got among the "condemned." Ill, and with no friend, the poor boy's heart was almost broken with grief.

It was a rough life, the sea, then, and little Silas Told had his share of the hardships. The vessel, on her way home from the Bay of Campeachy and Jamaica, was for fourteen weeks short of provisions, the crew being reduced, after the third week, to a biscuit and two-thirds of a pint of water a day. The men would certainly have all perished but that a thunder-rain descended upon them off Cuba, and the captain, stopping the scuppers, saved six casks of muddy bitter water by swabbing the decks and then wringing the swabs into the tubs. When they reached Blue Fields (west point of Jamaica), the last half pint of maggoty water had been drunk, and there was not a biscuit or a spoonful of flour in the hold. Mr. Told, in his autobiography (which is a curious picture of a sailor's life in the last century), says:

"When we came to an anchor in Blue Fields Bay, we hoisted out the long-boat, stowed her full of casks, and despatched her for the fresh water, when one of our men fell flat upon his belly, and drank so immoderately, that a few hours after he came on board he expired; and the next morning we sewed him up in a hammock and threw him overboard, when a large shark descended after him, and, we supposed, swallowed the whole body."

While the Prince of Wales was riding at anchor in Kingston harbour, with one hundred and five hogsheads of sugar just on board, there came on a hurricane, preceded by ominous splitting noises in the air. This storm raged from eight o'clock at night till six o'clock in the following evening. Told's ship parted all her three new cables, and drove twelve miles down the harbour. Seventy-six sail of other ships were dismantled, and cast high and dry on land. A heavy brigantine was tossed upon a wharf, and a sloop of one hundred tons hurled upon its deck. Hundreds of cocoa-nut trees were also snapped or torn up by the roots. The hurricane ceased suddenly, blew again madly for an hour, then lulled for good. During two or three days after, drowned seamen were washed on shore for miles down the harbour.

The hurricane was followed by a pestilence. Every morning Told (himself sick with fever

and ague) saw thirty or forty corpses carried past his window. The brutal captain deserted the sick sailor, and left him to the tender mercies of a negro, who once a day brought a dose of Jesuits' bark to the warehouse, where he had been swung in a hammock. Told, describing his utter misery for eleven months, says:

"At length my master gave me up, and I wandered up and down the town, almost parched with the insufferable blaze of the sun, till I was resolved to lay me down and die, as I had neither money nor friend. Accordingly I fixed upon a dunghill on the east end of the town of Kingston; and, being in so weak a condition, I pondered much upon Job's case, and considered mine similar to that of his. However, I was fully resigned to death, nor had I the slightest expectations of relief from any quarter; yet the kind providence of God was over me, and raised me up a friend in an entire stranger. A London captain, coming by, was struck with the sordid object, came up to me, and, in a very compassionate manner, asked me if I was sensible of any friend upon the island of whom I could obtain relief. He likewise asked me to whom I belonged. I answered, to Captain Moses Lilly, and had been cast away in the late hurricane. This captain appeared to have some knowledge of my master, and, cursing him for a barbarous villain, told me he would compel him to take proper care of me." A quarter of an hour after, Told's master arrived, and took him to a public-house, where he was lodged with a Mrs. Hutchinson. When he recovered, he was taken home by Captain David Jones, a kind and humane man, captain of the Montserrat. The boatswain of this vessel cured the poor boy of his fever in five hours, and he became more lively and active than before.

On the voyage home an accident happened strikingly evidencing the superstitions then prevalent among even sailors of some education. Five weeks after losing sight of the green Bermudas, the captain ordered a man to keep a bright look-out from the topmast-head, expecting soon to catch sight of Cape Clear. One morning, about seven o'clock, the look-out at the mast-head threw out the signal for land, about two points on the weather-bow; but as at that time the ship was running with the wind on the starboard-beam, the captain deemed it most advisable to brace all sharp up, and lie as near the wind as we possibly could. The land soon became conspicuous to the naked eye from the deck, and the course was changed as the land edged round, but there was no attempt to make any nearer approach towards it than a full league. For ten hours the men watched it as they cleared the decks, bending the cables ready for anchorage, or to run into harbour in case of any emergency. Told says:

"I do not remember ever to have seen any place apparently more fertile, or better cultivated; the fields seeming to be covered with verdure, and very beautiful; and as the surf

of the sea almost convinced us that it was playing on the shore, we were beyond all doubt for the space of ten hours that the ship had made a convenient landfall. Our captain therefore gave the man who first discovered it ten gallons of rum and twenty pounds of sugar; but about six o'clock in the evening, as we were washing the decks, and the sun was shining clear from the westward, in less than a minute we lost all sight of the land, and nothing but the horizon, interspersed with a few pale clouds, was perceptible from the deck. This filled the ship's company with the utmost astonishment and confusion; nor did we make the coast of Ireland for several days after. Our captain and ship's company concluded that it was Old Brazil, which navigators affirm to have been destroyed by an earthquake between five hundred and six hundred years ago."

The Old Brazil was of course simply the Fata Morgana, brilliantly vivid, and seen in an unusual latitude—an optical illusion in the world's camera, very curious as a phenomenon, but quite refusing to be classed as a fact even on the verge of the supernatural.

On arriving at Bristol, Told was transferred by his master to the *Royal George* (Timothy Tucker commander), bound for Guinea and the West Indies. Told's new captain proved a most cruel villain. One Sunday, a very short time after Told's joining, as he was down in the gun-room, busy at the bread-cask getting out biscuit for the ship's company, Captain Timothy Tucker came down, accused Told loudly of waste, and, going to his cabin, returned with a large horsewhip, and beat the boy till his clothes were cut in ribbons and his bones began to show. He then threw him along the deck, and leaped upon him. This cruelty would have certainly ended in murder, had not the people taken the lad and thrown him under the windlass as if he had been a dead cat.

One day, at Bonny, Told was taken on shore, by the king Arigo, for change of air. On this occasion, when the negroes found a sudden alarm would not cure Told of an excruciating headache, they carried him up to the precipice where their great "palaver house" was, and offered yams, and sacrificed dogs, to their gods. The "grandmen" then led him, through a desert, back to the ship (just as bad as ever), sprinkling the dust before him with palm wine on going on board. Cruel Captain Tucker, to bring him out of the fever, whipped him till he could not stand.

These Guinea captains were savage wretches, hardened by the brutalities of slave-dealing. Once when a black slave was ill, and would not eat, Tucker flogged him savagely, till he was all one wound. He then called for one of his men to bring him two pistols, putting one to the slave's forehead, crying he would "tickeravoo him," which was negroish for "settle him." The poor creature made no resistance, but merely said, "Adomma," "so be it." Tucker fired, the man put his hand to his head, and the blood gushed out like wine from a cask; but he did

not fall. Tucker then put a pistol to his ear, and fired; but the negro still did not drop. "At last," says Told, "the captain swore horribly, and ordered John Lad to fire another through his heart, which was done; he then dropped down dead. All the men slaves, in consequence of this uncommon murder, rose upon the ship's company, with full purpose to slay us all; but we, nimbly betaking ourselves to the cannons, pointed them through a bulk-head that parted the main and quarter deck; which when they perceived, the greater part of them ran down between decks, and the remainder jumped overboard, and were all drowned, save one or two, which, with the assistance of the jolly-boat, we rescued from the violence of the sea."

On his arrival at Bristol, Told's original master received all his wages, and did not even give him a present. He was, therefore, having no friends, compelled to take a second voyage with that terrible murderer, Captain Timothy Tucker.

When the vessel was "slaved," that is, ready with her human cargo, and ready to sail for Bonny, one midnight, outside the bar, the slaves began to scream and howl, crying that Egbo (the devil) was among them. The next morning, when the hatches were opened, forty were dead of suffocation, out of eighty, and were instantly thrown overboard. The ship's cook, having only green wood for his furnace, was always late with his dinner, which so exasperated the fierce-tempered captain that he used to perpetually horsewhip the man, or cut him with his own knife. The poor cook (Jack Bundy), weary of life, at last threw himself over the ship's side, and was drowned, to the captain's great satisfaction.

After this, Told was shipped on board the *Scipio*, commanded by a liberal, pleasant-tempered man, named Roach. One evening, when they lay at anchor off New Calabar, a negro-dealer came on board to sell slaves, while the captain was brewing a tub of punch on the quarter-deck with the ship's company. Tom Ancora (the dealer, who talked English), making the captain's favourite female slave drink brandy out of his own glass, so irritated Roach that he thrust out Tom's front teeth with his cane, and then ran to the state cabin for his pistol to shoot the man. Tom, however, threw himself overboard, and was picked up by the men of his own canoe. The captain then resolved, against the advice of the whole ship's company, to go on shore and make peace with Tom. He therefore put on his sword, arrayed himself in a state suit of scarlet plush, and went and supped with Tom, who took care, under the guise of frank friendliness, to give him a strong dose of poison that partially paralysed and eventually killed the captain. The friendly negroes could have given him antidotes, but the captain, not believing he had been poisoned, refused their remedies.

Just inside the bar, Adam, a negro, headed a mutiny of the slaves, who threw the cook into a furnace full of boiling rice, and stabbed and

threw overboard the boatswain. Wells, the cooper, they let go because he had often given them water. Told describes the sequel in his own simple way: "The cooper then got over the quarter-deck bulkhead to the arms-chest, took up a loaded pistol, and shot Adam through the head; the other slaves, at seeing their champion dead, ran all down between decks, were closely confined, and admirably well secured, to prevent a second massacre; and as the captain lay dangerously ill, and only five men able to work the ship, we, with the greatest and most elaborate toil, reached the West Indies in three weeks. Upon the ship's arrival there, the owner of her made the cooper a present of sixty pounds for his services on board her at the time of those assassinations."

While at Calabar, Told, sent on shore armed, "to enforce trade," saw a negro dressed in a thick silk grass net, as Mumbo Jumbo, flogging the women. This supposed demon threatened Told, who drew his hanger, resolving, if the rascal had not fled, to have cut off his head.

The admirers of Barry Cornwall's beautiful poem of "The Admiral" will be interested with a superstition of the sailors, related by Told, as preceding the death of Captain Roach:

"Every day, in the course of his weakness in body, he made repeated efforts to reach the cabin windows, in order to receive the cooling air; and at whatever times he looked in the water, a devil-fish was regularly swimming at the stern of the ship; he did not appear to be a fish of prey, but his breadth from fin to fin was about twenty-eight feet, and in length about seven or eight, with a wide tail, and two ivory horns in front. He followed the ship, to our best calculation, near one thousand eight hundred miles; nor was it remembered by any of the ship's crew that a fish of that nature had made its appearance in the course of any of their voyages. Perpetual attempts to destroy or catch this monster was made, by the fastening a thick rope round the body of a dead negro, and casting him overboard, but it was ineffectual; the fish swam close under our stern, got his horns entangled in the rope, underran it to the end, and then tossed his refused prey several yards above the water. When the captain died, he forsook the ship, and we saw him no more."

Told's troubles were not over yet. Between Jamaica and Cuba they were boarded by Spanish pirates, and were instantly stripped and ordered for execution at eight o'clock the following morning, on the platform under Cape Nicholas. Told hid the captain's gold watch under the coals in the fore-castle, and, being ordered to surrender it, was followed down the fore-castle and stunned by a thievish Spanish sailor, who then stole the watch. This being told the Spanish commander, he instantly got back the watch, and let Told and his companions weigh anchor for England. But misfortunes were still waiting for them, as the devil-fish had waited for the captain. Three days after the

pirates let them go out of their clutches, the sentinel one morning reported to the man at the helm fifty sail of ships on the lee bow. These ships, however, proved to be the teeth of a reef, and the next moment the unlucky vessel was on the rocks, irrecoverably lost. The long-boat was instantly lowered, but, being very leaky, sank to the gunwale, and spoiled all the bags of biscuit that had been saved. The men, however, erected an awning to keep off the insufferable heat, and began to explore the coast of the island in their yawl. It promised nothing but land-crabs and sea-fish. The captain then forced Told and three or four other sailors to swim to the wreck, two miles distant, to roll ashore some casks of fresh water. Told, who had seen in the harbour of St. Thomas three sharks divide a man between them, swam in fear and dread, but nevertheless effected his return in safety. After three weeks spent in deplorable misery, the clouds of mosquitoes became so troublesome that Told and his companions, who were almost naked, had to bury themselves in the sand, even their hands and faces, only clearing at intervals their mouths and noses in order to breathe. On his return from a reconnoitring tour round the island, Told was ordered to put out to a sloop lying in the offing. When they came up to the vessel, its crew presented loaded blunderbusses, and threatened to fire on them and send the yawl to the bottom with a shot from a six-pounder, thinking they were pirates. Eventually the captain, however, became reassured, and sent his boats to save the rum, cotton, and pimento from the shattered vessel, aided by the boat of some Virginian turtle fishermen. They then set sail for Boston, and in three weeks came in sight of the Gay Head of St. Matthias's Vineyard, as that curiously stratified headland is called by the Americans. The very night they came to anchor, the vessel drifted on the rocks during a storm, and was lost. Told swam naked to land, with four others, and getting a rope on shore, saved the rest of their companions. The governor of the island, a rich man, with two thousand head of cattle and twenty thousand sheep, wished Told to marry one of his daughters; but Told declined, and crossed over to Sandwich, the nearest town on the mainland. Here and at Hanover the poor shipwrecked men were treated with the greatest kindness and hospitality. Told's brief notes upon Boston are eminently characteristic of the man. "We soon," he says, "entered Boston, a commodious beautiful city, with seventeen spired meetings, the Dissenting religion being then established in that part of the world. I resided here for the space of four months, and lodged with Captain Seaborn, at Deacon Townsend's, by trade a blacksmith. Here I shall only make a few observations, touching the nature and disposition of the inhabitants of that city. Their behaviour is altogether amiable, as peacemakers; and they are naturally blessed with humane inclinations, together with such strict order and economy as I never before observed; nor do I ever remember to have heard one oath uttered,

or the name of the Lord mentioned, save upon a religious occasion, during the four months I tarried at that place."

Told, after this, went out to Antigua in the Ann and Judith, and then to Old Calabar, to buy slaves for the South Carolina planters. In 1733 he sailed in a corn-vessel for Genoa and Leghorn, with a captain who kept them beating to windward in the Channel for five weeks, during the whole of which time they had neither cooked provisions nor dry clothes. On his return home, off the Isle of Wight, poor Told, eager for home and rest, was seized (according to the cruel and arbitrary custom of those days), put on board a tender, and sent to the Phoenix man-of-war. A religious captain on board this vessel gave new impulses to Told's natural bias. He began to hear voices and see visions. He gives a very naïve account of a supernatural cure from rheumatism which he was vouchsafed. "Early one morning," he says, "God undertook my cause, and I began thus to reason with myself: 'The rheumatism! What is it?' and it was strongly suggested to me in a manner not unlike a clear voice, 'It is a violent cold.' I then, with great astonishment, asked, 'What is most proper as a remedy for the cold?' I was answered as before, 'Spring water.' The reason of this I could not comprehend, and asked again, 'Why spring water?' The answer to me (clear as a strong voice) was: 'Man was created out of the dust of the earth, and water springs out of the bowels of the earth, therefore it is the more adapted to his nature.'" He tried the simple remedy suggested by his internal voice, and was, he says, instantly cured.

In 1734, Told married Mary Verney, "a virtuous young woman," and was soon after sent in the Grafton (70 guns) to Lisbon, with our fleet, to protect the Brazilian squadron from the Spaniards. In 1736, after a narrow escape from the ever-ready rocks of Scilly, Told arrived in Chatham river, was paid off, and left the sea for ever.

He now resolved on leading a life according to his higher impulses. He was dissatisfied with the life of Churchmen, yet could find no surer foothold. "It pleased God," he says, "to point me out, in a few months, a school at Staplefoot Tauney, near Passingsford Bridge, in the county of Essex, erected by a Lady Luther, who spared no pains in its building; and also bestowed many donations towards the support and maintenance thereof. My whole salary amounted to fourteen pounds per annum, ten pounds whereof was the neat salary from the school; two pounds from Lady Luther, and the like sum from Mr. Moot, a wealthy farmer, with as many day-scholars as I could acquire for my own account."

Lady Luther invited Told and the curate to dine with her three days in the week, and every other day (and this is a curious fact, as illustrating social history) in the servants' hall. The curate used frequently to invite Told, the schoolmaster, to his lodgings to smoke a pipe,

share a bottle of punch, and sing a sea-song. On rebuking the curate for these excesses, which preyed upon his conscience, the curate told him to his (Told's horror) that the Bible was a pack of false theology, on which Told at once renounced his friendship. Told was soon after this deprived of his appointment by the lord of the manor, because Told's boys picked firewood on the land of a farmer of his, who had himself given him leave without the squire's consent.

Told returned to London, and became clerk to a coal and timber merchant at the back of Beaufort-buildings, and after that book-keeper to a bricklayer in Watling-street. It was at this crisis of his fortunes that what he considered his sudden conversion took place, and he became a disciple of Wesley. Of his earlier visions Told gives a curious and simple-hearted account.

"When I was about twelve years old," he says, "I was more profoundly acquainted with divine things, but not with myself as a sinner. Sitting one day in my order, and reading the Pilgrim's Progress, I suddenly laid down the book, leaned my right elbow on my right knee, with my hand supporting my head, and meditated in the most solemn thought upon the awfulness of eternity. Suddenly I was struck with a hand on the top of my head, which affected my whole frame; the blow was immediately followed by a voice with these words: 'Dark! dark! dark!' and although it alarmed me prodigiously, yet, upon the recovery from so sudden a motion, I found myself broad awake in a world of sin. Notwithstanding all my former happiness and-bliss, I now found a dreadful difference." On another occasion, when bathing with some schoolfellows, he was all but drowned in a brook near Bristol, and, as he lay insensible, he had a vision of the heavenly city, and of the spirits of the just gliding over its crystal pavement.

In July, 1740, Told first went to Short's-gardens, and after that to the Foundry, to hear Mr. Wesley. Told was greatly prejudiced against the Methodists, believing that they listened to false prophets and cheats, who wanted to turn a penny, and that they assembled for bad purposes in cellars and dens. The meeting was soon after four o'clock in the morning, it being almost dangerous for them to meet at all. The Foundry was a ruinous place, full of holes and corners, with an old pantile roof and a temporary pulpit built up of rotten timber. At one corner, among some old crones, sat an old woman who kept her face covered with her apron the whole time. Every one's countenance bore an expression of profound seriousness. The sermon was on the suddenness of conversion. Told heard a voice say to him, "This is the truth." His soul seemed on fire, and he said to the friend who had brought him:

"As long as I live, I will never part from Mr. Wesley."

The now zealous Methodist became next a clerk at a wharf at Wapping, but, at Mr. Wes-

ley's wish, finally relinquished the employment to take charge of the school at the Foundry, of sixty boys and six girls. For this he had board and lodging, and ten shillings a week. He worked daily from five in the morning till five at night. In the seven years that he held this office, Told educated two hundred and seventy-five boys, and sent them out to good trades.

In the year 1744, Wesley preached at the Foundry school on the text, "I was sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not." This sermon threw the morbidly conscientious man, for a time, into a state of hopeless terror, because he believed he had neglected a great Christian duty. Two or three days after, a message came to the school, asking some one of Mr. Wesley's people to come to Newgate to see ten malefactors then under sentence of death, who had been "awakened," and wished some one with whom to pray. One of these men, Lancaster, told him he had been converted that morning at five o'clock, and he should shortly be in paradise. Two of the prisoners were respited, and these two were unconverted. Lancaster thanked God for having been sent to Newgate, and as his irons were being removed, he prayed till the sheriff shed tears. When the last man's irons fell off, Lancaster clapped his hands together, and cried out with joy: "Here comes another of our little flock."

A gentleman present said, with sympathy, "I think it is too great a flock for such an occasion;" but Lancaster replied, rejoicingly, "Oh no; there is room in heaven for us all."

Mr. Told gives a very terrible picture of the executions in those days. (Who does not remember the terrible gibbet of Hogarth, with the hangman lolling on the top, smoking his pipe, and lazily waiting for the death-cart?)

"This," says Told, "was the first time of my visiting the malefactors at Newgate, and of my attendance upon them to the place of execution; and then it was not without much shame and fear, because I clearly perceived the greater part of the populace considered me as one of the sufferers. When we came to the fatal tree, Lancaster lifted up his eyes thereto, and said, 'Blessed be God,' then prayed extemporary in a very excellent manner, and the others behaved with great discretion. John Lancaster had no friend who could procure for his body a proper interment; so that, when they had hung the usual space of time, and were cut down, the surgeon's mob secured the body of Lancaster, and carried it over to Paddington. There was a very crowded concourse, among whom were numberless gin and gingerbread vendors, accompanied by pickpockets of almost every denomination in London; in short, the whole scene resembled a principal fair, rather than an awful execution."

Just after the bodies had been cut down, a party of sailors arrived, armed with truncheons, and inquired of one of the few remaining bystanders—an old woman who sold gin—where the surgeon's mob had taken Lancaster's body to.

They then went and demanded it, and carried it in procession round Islington and Shoreditch, and from there to Coverley's-gardens, where, getting tired of their work of philanthropy, they left the body, by common consent, on the step of the nearest door. This produced a riot, the noise of which brought the old woman of the house down stairs. To her horror, the corpse was the body of her own son.

Silas Told seems to have done great good in Newgate, where he formed thirty-six felons and debtors into a religious society. It was in the midst of a season of great mental agony that Told saw the visions that finally completed his conversion. How extremes meet! They remind us vividly of the visions of St. Francis of Sales. The scene of the event was a secluded field between Ratcliff-row and the Shepherd and Shepherdess, where the unhappy man had been wandering, wishing himself a cow or a dog, and hoping that some chance footpad would murder him.

"On a sudden," he says, "in the twinkling of an eye, a hand struck me a weighty blow on the top of my head, which in some measure affected my senses; but I instantly found myself crying with a loud voice, 'Praise God, praise God,' and, looking up, I beheld the ethereal universe, replete with the glory of God; and that glory of such substance and palpability, I thought I could have laid hold of it with my hand. This attended me for the space of a minute; but was succeeded by an uncommon thick darkness, through which a black dart, as if it was shot from the hill near Islington, pierced its way, and, with wonderful swiftness, entered my heart. I did not feel any pain thereby; but it was followed with these words, 'This is one of your old delusions.' As I looked up, the heavens were unclosed about a mile in length, as it appeared to my mortal eyes, and tapered away to a point at each end. The centre of this awful and sacred avenue was about twelve feet wide, wherein I saw the Lord Jesus standing in the form of a man, holding both his inestimably precious hands upright, and from the palms thereof the blood streaming down; floods of tears gushed from my eyes, and trickled down my cheeks. I said, 'Lord, it is enough!' nor have I once doubted since, but that I was freely justified at that time."

In 1767, Mr. Told visited the infamous Mrs. Brownrigg, then in Newgate under sentence of death for flogging to death her apprentice-girl, Mary Clifford, in Fleur-de-Lis-court, Fetter-lane. She had been a great hypocrite, and had a reputation in Fetter-lane as a religious character. She said to Mr. Told:

"About ten years ago, when I had six small children about me, I walked closely in the ways of God, never being able to accuse myself of negligence or inattention, rising at five o'clock in the morning, and being at Bow-churchyard, in Cheapside, at six o'clock prayers. Then, Mr. Told, I was very happy in my God, who manifested himself to me, so that I walked steadfastly in the light of his blessed countenance

for a considerable time. But, oh! unhappily for me, &c."

She also informed Mr. Told that she had a knife secreted about her when in the Poultry Compter, and had studied how best to kill herself. She died, however, Mr. Told assures us, sincerely devout and penitent. He accompanied her to the gallows, where she was received by cheers and storms of curses, especially from the women, who filled the carts that were drawn up all down the Old Bailey. The cruel mob threw stones and dirt, and kept shouting:

"Pull her hat off, that we may see her face."

Told, one of the patriarchs of early Methodism, after a life of incessant usefulness, died in December, 1779, aged sixty-eight.

THE IDEAL.

A TALL majestic lady,
With locks of deepest dye,
A silken dress, whose gorgeousness
Delights no other eye,
A pretty little cottage,
With ivy cover'd o'er,
And she, my pride, my fancy's bride,
Expectant at the door.

Soft music in the gloaming
Ebbes gurgling from her throat;
While I lie still, and drink my fill
Of each love-burdened note.
Days spent in sweet communion
'Neath shade of leafy trees;
We woo and sing, and ev'rything
Is poetry and ease.

A tiny fairy being
Lies nestling on my breast,
As, tired of play, she seems to say,
"This is my rightful rest;"
And in those baby features,
So beautiful and mild,
Methinks I trace another face,
The mother of my child.

THE REAL.

A slight but comely lady,
With rippling chesnut hair,
A cotton dress, in which, no less,
She looks extremely fair;
A busy bustling beauty,
On household duties bent,
Who speaks, the while, with happy smile,
Of kindness and content.

A little house in London;
No ivy and no flowers,
But what care we for botany?
That little house is ours.
And often in the evening,
When we hear some well-known cry,
Or tramp of feet along the street,
We smile, my wife and I.

No little fairy daughter
Nestling confidingly;
Four healthy boys, whose ceaseless noise
Brings childhood back to me.

Yet these prosaic blessings,
Of which I have my share,
In peace and love, soar far above
My castle in the air.

DRY STICKS.

PLOUGHING sea-sand and watering dry sticks count for much the same things in human work, and come to about the same results. And yet, unsatisfactory occupations as they are, they are indulged in by many beside those amiable enthusiasts—politicians and others—who systematically spend their strength in trying to make dead bodies live, and brute matter into sprightly organisms. They are indulged in by men of business sometimes; by parents and guardians and teachers often; by the dispensers of public patronage, when there are back-stairs, trodden by dainty feet or powerful ones, leading to their warrant-room; by physicians and prison disciplinarians—these last two with lamentable waste of force and zeal; by statesmen, clergymen, and writers; by all manipulators of human life, indeed, when they press an idea in excess of material, and decide that Will shall command Power. Which last clause contains the whole principle and mystery of watering dry sticks and ploughing sea-sand.

Take the men who endeavour to resuscitate a defunct business, as an example. It may be a brewery noted for a disastrous intimacy with cocculus and strychnine; a journal in the agonies of death by atrophy; an agency with clients once plentiful enough in English houses, but now only located in Spanish castles; a shop which customers obstinately shun because of former ill-repute, or because of the diversion of trade and traffic. Capital and energy may be poured out like water on the concern—enough to have established half a dozen new creations; but the present plant is only a dry stick, and not baptism in Jordan itself could bring it to life again. For all things human seem to have a certain period of vitality—some longer, some shorter, according to original constitution, but all mortal alike. Trades, like men and women, and societies, like nations, like families, like individuals, are not to be revived when once fairly moribund. And the great test of practical insight is, when a man knows the difference between the two states of syncope and death; and what is only suspended animation which may be set going again by timely stimulants, and what is absolute decease, which is done with now and for ever. This, too, will come in the world of the future, when all human powers shall be under laws.

What dry sticks are watered by home love and care!—what sacrificial laying bare of living roots goes on in families for the better earthing-up of bits of dead wood, fit only to be thrown down and cast into the fire!—or, worse still, for misplaced growths, parasites, or pea-sticks, say, which develop an unhealthy vitality, and suck the nourishment from what they were intended

to support. These are the brothers who spend their sisters' money, the husbands who live on their wives' earnings, the fathers who have run through their own, and now fall open-mouthed upon their children's property; these are the pea-sticks with fine green top-knots basking in the sun, while the withered halm and dying flowers at their feet speak of nourishment diverted, and force abstracted, and power, which should have been creative, gone all to pushing out green top-knots on dry sticks. Better if they had remained dry sticks to the end, sapless and leafless, rather than budding evils of an active kind; better that force should be wasted in trying to give nonentity a being, than that it should go to the creation of mischief.

We all know cases where the power of a family is wasted on watering dry sticks—where the eldest son, for instance—for whom are destined all those broad acres, and who is to undertake all that social influence—is bad, or a fool, while the younger branches, who are carted out of the paternal nursery-ground almost as soon as budded, would have done honour to the position their senior will disgrace. Not all the watering in the world will make that dry stick a flowering tree; not, though every drop was drawn out of the family well in buckets of gold made out of the family plate melted down for the service. Schooling will not inform him if he is a dunce according to the configuration of Gall and Spurzheim; not the most eloquent preachments ever written about the moral obligations connected with social position will arouse a spark of social conscience if he is self-indulgent and a sensualist; nor could Lord Chesterfield himself make him a gentleman after the manner of the Bayards or the Cids, if he is naturally a Fagin or a Sykes. He is a dull, dead, dry stick in the beginning, and a dull, dead, dry stick he will continue to the end; and the only sign of vitality he will ever give will be by the absorption of the living juices which else would have gone to make noble growths of better materials. A notable instance of this occurred not long ago; a case known to us all; where money, name, and family all went to form an unclean animal, who—assuredly more pitiable even than blameworthy to those who can accept the necessities of matter—remained a dry stick, which no amount of watering or dressing could make a burgeoning rod! It would have been better for every one if the hopelessness of that stick had been recognised in time, whereby palisading might have been provided, to the saving of force and rampant scandal.

Schoolmasters and schoolmistresses see a great deal of the culture of dry sticks. They help in it at times themselves, when they grind at chaff which can never become flour, and plough at sea-sand which can never bear grain. The boobies they work at, striving to give brains where there are none, and to inculcate accomplishments for which there is no kind of aptitude! Sheep that we are, we must all follow the bell-wether—we must all be shorn,

and ruddled, and branded according to one pattern, like so many casts turned out of the same mould, no matter what the differences of material among us. Because it is the fashion for those who can, to learn music, French, or algebra, we put to the same things those who cannot, and then feel ourselves aggrieved and angry according to righteousness—so we say—when our notable scheme of education by machinery falls to the ground in collapse, and our dry sticks bear no blossoms. Anna Maria can play efficiently, and can sing like a lark—she has that mysterious gift called ear, and knows both time and tune by instinct; but Mary Jane can hardly recognise God save the Queen when she hears it on the brass band, and for the life of her, poor soul! can never make her counting and her crotchets agree. In default of music, though, she has a veritable genius for cookery; or she has the prettiest taste imaginable for that wonderful combination of ends and snippets which goes by the name of millinery: but *cui bono*? Cookery is low, and millinery is vulgar. Cannot puffs and bonnets be bought for ready cash? But music is a divine accomplishment fresh from the hands of Apollo and the Muses, and created expressly for ladies. Wherefore, Mary Jane must study clefs as the accompaniment of her condition, and eschew domestic economy as discords; she must labour at that which she cannot attain, and forego that which is success made to her hand, because the Anna Marias of life have time and tune in pronounced development, and depressions are not recognised in good society. The dry stick which she, like all the rest of us, has in the midst of her living growth must be carefully tended and watered, while the saplings, which only ask leave to grow according to the laws of their nature, are crowded out and destroyed. And so poor Mary Jane bears no fruit of the mental kind at all, being forbidden apples and not able to compass peaches.

What a lamentable instance of this determination that thistles shall bring forth figs and dry sticks bud out into flowering roses, was that of Maulstick's son! Maulstick was an artist with aspirations in excess of power—by no means a rare thing in the artistic world, or elsewhere—going up to heaven on Icarian wings badly secured with common wax, without even an inch of packthread to help; and floundering in the mire in consequence. He had just common sense enough to know the difference between the mire and the ether, and to feel that his wings were, after all, a little insecure, and not quite adapted for long journeys into the empyrean; and he decided that his son's career should be the complement of his—the fulfilment of all in which he had failed. Maulstick's son was a dry stick. Planted in a city office, and perched upon a clerk's stool, with its work ruled out before it, it might have struck down a handful of roots, and have subsequently borne fruit of a kind—poor and shabby in quality, and of scanty quantity at all times, the central sap being of but a watery na-

ture—but still fruit whereby a household could live, if with only Duke Humphrey as the daily guest. But cut and carved into the likeness of an artist—winged and bidden to soar to the empyrean forthwith—he was a failure—a mere lay figure, draped according to rules and devoid of locomotive power. Artist! he had no more artistry in him than he had military genius! A mere dull copyist, what was there in him of the fire that lived in Raffaele and glowed through the soul of Rubens! A formal transcript there, with the tracing-paper held very tight, and a dry detail here—yes, he could do these sure enough! But formal transcripts and dry details could not bring grist to the family mill; and by the time that Maulstick looked down from heaven to earth—from the ideal to the real—and beheld his mistake, the mischief was done, and a tolerable clerk had been spoilt in the vain endeavour to make an impossible artist.

Clericus committed the same mistake when he insisted on his son's taking to square-cut vests and dearly beloved brethren, in continuation of his own special manner of rooting. The lad remonstrated, but in vain; he hated square-cut vests, and wanted nothing with his dearly beloved brethren, save to order them up to the cannon's mouth. Clericus held the purse-strings and rode his son's destiny with that strongest of all martingales. It mattered nothing to him that the boy was born to be a cavalry officer—that his whole soul lay in the pomp and circumstances of the parade-ground—and that the glorious creatures standing in their loose boxes at the Horse Guards were to him like beatified visions, worth all the saints ever canonised. Clericus, guiding destiny with those purse-strings of his, drove past the Horse Guards to the Abbey, and planted there a stick in the shape of a drinking, roystering, fox-hunting parson, who kept his gown on his back simply because no one took the trouble of stripping it off. These were two instances of watering dry sticks and misplanting growths with a vengeance! Ploughing sea-sand in Maulstick's case, without reaping even a mouthful of thistles good for donkeys, if not for daintier feeders; in the other, budding with night-shade what was meant to bear pomegranates. But theirs are by no means exceptional instances; for they both have brothers—many brothers—at this moment employed in the same unprofitable methods of horticulture.

Another manner of watering dry sticks, half-painful and half-pathetic, is, when the strength of a family goes to the maintenance of its weakest members, while the robust, with a useful future if well cared for, are elipt of their power that the sickly, of no future whatever, may be shored up for a few more years of suffering than nature, unassisted, would give them. This is seen much among the poor, and the class immediately above the poor—that class which is fashioned out of the tattered fringe of poor gentility—with appearances to keep up, and inadequate means on which to keep them

up. An unremunerative member to them is almost as heavy a dead weight as with the very poor, to whom it means simply food and clothing out of the common fund, and nothing put into it. And yet it must be done! That sickly girl, that feckless boy must be supported in sufficiency, though the younger ones are pinched for their share: that poor diseased creature must be tended night and day, no matter what the work lying to be done, and the value of the time taken to water the dry stick of a hopeless malady! The butcher's bill must be cut low while the doctor's is running high; the schooling of those who else would have been learning the accidence of their own future profitable gardening must be stopped, while the nurse's fees have to be paid, preparatory to those of the sexton and undertaker. It must be so. Our sick and diseased must not perish for want of extremest care, even though the healthy give of their health and the strong of their power. And in taking the living beams to shore up the dry sticks of the community, the good done to general morality, by the tenderness and self-sacrifice called forth, more than compensates for the individual loss incurred. It is a problem why it should be, but a truth all the same, that so much of public good springs from private damage. The storm which clears the atmosphere for miles round, letting the checked crops grow while it sweeps away the fever that has been brooding in the stifled air, ruins the farmers close at hand; the persecution which established a creed good for all time by the blood of its first professors, brought sorrow and wailing to hundreds of hearths, though it brought light and freedom to millions after; the monstrous wrong which redeemed a race from abject barbarism through the partial suffering of a few—these, and many more examples, if we cared to tabulate them, evidence the truth of public gain coming by private loss—evidence, but do not explain. And on this plea we must accept as necessary, that painful and pathetic watering of dry sticks which one sees in families, when the unremunerative members are kept alive at the expense of the workers, and the spiritual gain of sacrifice is bought by the material loss of strength. Unless, indeed, we go through and beyond all this, and uphold the physical well-doing of the public as superior to its moral elevation. In which case we must knock on the head all the old women, and half the old men, all the feckless, the sickly, the paupers the criminals, and the imbecile; and so reduce society to a residuum of practical efficiency which shall mean simply the dominion of selfishness and the tyranny of force.

There is a good deal of dry stick watering done, almost literally, in the bleaker parts of the country, where husbandry is ten failures for one success. Down in the North are farms lying on the edge of barrenness, where a man's whole lifetime of labour can scarcely dig out a miserable subsistence. Unlike the advancing outposts of the Far West, where toil is rewarded by abundance—where "the earth

tickled with a hoe laughs back with a harvest"—and where every settler's shanty is another stone added to the great temple of civilisation—these outlying farms of England are of no general value, and surely of no special gain. They are simply concerns in which money is laid out at one per cent instead of at five or ten, and hardly wrought for, even at such a per-centage. I have always a feeling of wonder and admiration for the heroism which can devote itself to this ungrateful cultivation. The hungry crops laid year after year by the storms that ever seem to quite leave the uplands, or if not laid, then left to rot in the winter snow for want of sun to ripen for the gathering; the beasts that perish in the bleak winters or the wet springs; the lambs that are lost on the fells, that perish of hunger crag-fast, or are dashed down the precipice, perhaps storm-driven, perhaps hunted by the hill foxes or masterless dogs, wandering loose; the painful, toilsome living that is got between the starved land and the inclement seasons; and yet the farmer toils on, content if he can manage his rent and the children's porridge, and thinking he has gained all a son of Adam needs to enable him to sing *Nunc dimittis* for his own part, if he can be buried free of expense to the parish. I have often grieved over these dry sticks of our Cumberland farms; but I suppose they are in some mysterious way necessary to the nation. There must be fringes everywhere—gradations and shadings, and the lines of demarcation blurred and softened, and links between right and left of varying sizes; and so with farms as with man—beasts and sheep standing in the place of vices, and barley and wheat representing social circumstances.

There is much watering of dry sticks among the young in the time of love-making; among the old, too, for the matter of that: that time never being quite sure as to its limitations, being prolonged or curtailed with an irregularity distracting to statisticians. How many hearts grow only dry sticks for the garden of love! Not, perhaps, all dry sticks—there may be a central clump of blooming May blossom for the one who can find his way; while for all others there are only palisadings of dry wood which no watering, even with the heart's best blood, can make alive. It is of no use trying! Nature is obstinately shut up; the sap will not rise, and the gardener's care is of no avail. When the irremediable mistake of a marriage has been made, and the dry sticks have been enclosed by a ring fence which only death can destroy, then the miserable gardener wakes to the consciousness of the hopeless labour lying in striving to make park palms into flowering trees—then he, or, it may be more unhappily, she, knows the last agony of the soul when life is coupled with death, till the eternal death unchains them. The first wisdom of all who are seeking matrimony and the ring fence, is to prove whether their saplings have roots and are living, or whether they are merely dry

sticks, incapable of growth and beauty. No question is so important: neither money, nor family, nor even health—next to the vitality of love the most needful of all things to prove strictly. But even sickness, like poverty, like vulgar relations, can be endured where there is real love; while, without that love, gold loses its brightness, and health its charm, and strength is no better than weakness, and sorrow sits for ever in the place of joy. For as nature without the rain and the dew—nature, parched into an illimitable Sahara, and peopled with wild beasts only—so is marriage without love!

There is much watering of dry sticks in minor matters, mainly noticeable in families, where dry sticks chiefly abound. It is watering a dry stick when a warm nature seeks to kindle up a stolid to enthusiasm or to poetry; it is watering a dry stick when a caressing mouth seeks to relax a "stiff upper lip" into gracious curves; the endeavour to make obstinacy pliant, to convince folly by force of reason, to win freedom from the domineering man, or woman, whose softest mood means playing Providence to every one's needs, real or fancied, to get generosity from a churl, or candour from a knave—all these are so many watering-pots used in the horticulture of dry sticks: with what result let common sense and experience say! Strength put forth in the attempts to revivify dead faiths and obsolete philosophies is again an example of dry stick watering, and by no means an uncommon one. So is the study of prophecy, both before and after the event. So is the expectation that humanity will live up to idealising laws fit for Utopia or Eden, but not for a sinful world, where women are weak and men are wicked. So again is the making of these idealising laws, Maine or otherwise. So are nine-tenths of the missionary enterprises; and so ninety-nine hundredths of the propagandism of all kinds always going on, whatever the distinctive appellation attached. So are many learned societies—Heaven save the mark!—which pluck one little fluttering twig off the great tree of life, and descant on that as if it were root and bole and branches, all complete. So is much of that "burning zeal" which passes under the name of energy, but which is simply fussiness and the whirl of misdirected power—setting chariot-wheels to hand-barrows, and driving golden ploughs over sea-sands. It is pitiable, indeed, to think how much of the work going on in the world is merely the watering of dry sticks, and how people cling to these dry sticks as to living trees, pitching their tents beneath them as complacently as if they were encamped beneath the cedars of Lebanon, or the vineyards of Italy. There is a glamour in these dead woods greater than that which filled the enchanted forest of Oberon, and no human power can show the bewitched indwellers the true form of the dead things they nurture so tenderly, and water so unceasingly. You may try, but you will not succeed. One by one you may pluck up those

dry sticks and show how rootless, how sapless, they are. The words are not cold on your lips before the waterers have replanted their beloved idols; and you must wait for the Day of Judgment until they are removed.

JEANNE VACHEROT.

SIXTUS THE FIFTH used to say that he was ready to canonise any woman who got praise from her husband. One of his saints ought to have been Jeanne Vacherot, even although the praise was posthumous.

On the 6th of May, 1640, she was married to Lancelot Le Moine, of Norman extraction, and a notary of the Châtelet, in Paris. He died in January, 1649, leaving her with three boys, Pierre, Jacques, and Louis, and appointing her by his will, dated 1645, their sole guardian during their minority—"desiring them to have no other guardian but her, because it would be their ruin."

The wishes of the defunct were strictly carried out. Jeanne Vacherot, widow of Lancelot Le Moine, was fully invested with the guardianship of her children by sentence of the Châtelet. Discreet and religious, well-conducted, and of good repute, she perfectly fulfilled her duties as a mother and a widow. She gave her three sons an education suitable to their condition—summary, no doubt—but quite sufficient, according to the notions of the day. She sent them to school, where they learnt to read, write, and cipher, and were even taught the elements of the Latin language.

Amongst the property which she had to manage were two farms, situated between Saint Pierre d'Autils and Vernon, a small fortified town in Normandy. They required her occasional visits to the latter place, where she was known by the title of the notaress. In September, 1654, she had to pay one of these visits, in order to receive her rents. Her three sons were, at that time, aged—Pierre, fourteen; Jacques, ten; and Louis not quite eight years. She took the youngest only with her, leaving the two others under the care of Catherine Janvier, their maternal grandmother, and a maid-servant, who had had charge of them from their infancy.

All this is common-place enough; the strange part of the story now begins. After the mother's departure, whether the grandmother and the servants allowed the boys to do pretty much as they liked, or whether they were led astray by bad examples, they forgot the way to school, filling up their time with truanting instead, in company with the two sons of a neighbour named Coustard. One fine evening the four young gentlemen failed to return to their respective homes. What had become of them? Neither the Morgue nor the Lieutenant de Police gave the slightest clue to their anxious friends.

After the lapse of several days, Coustard's two lads were brought back again by one of

the Provost Marshal's officers, crestfallen, haggard, tanned, with their clothes in tatters, but right glad to regain the comforts of bed and board, even at the expense of a paternal correction. Of the widow's sons there were not the slightest tidings. They had parted company with the others in the course of their wanderings. Jeanne Vacherot, informed of these sad events at Vernon, had the country searched all round about. In vain she caused their description to be published from village to village with trumpet and drum; she could not hit upon a trace of the fugitives. Several months were spent in fruitless inquiries. The distracted mother frequented fairs, questioned beggars, and visited gipsies' camps, for many stories were then current of children being carried off by strolling mendicants. But it is not easy to steal a boy of ten, still less of fourteen years of age; nor would he, even after a long confinement, forget his name and his parent's dwelling-place.

Finding all her endeavours useless, on the 12th of May, 1655, Jeanne Vacherot made her complaint before a commissaire, acquainting him with the disappearance of her children. It was a prudential step, a formality gone through with in obedience to sage advice, rather than a tardy measure to obtain a clue to the children's whereabouts. The police, at that time, and especially the rural police, was nearly powerless for good, and, what a mother's exertions had failed to accomplish, official interference was not likely to effect.

Meanwhile, poor Jeanne Vacherot had not forgotten her missing boys. One day she caught sight of a pauper lying on the steps of the Hôtel Dieu, in Paris, with a child by his side. A vague and distant resemblance to Jacques at once struck the mother's heart; she advanced and examined the beggar-boy, as she had already done with so many others. No, it was not her Jacques; this one was younger, slighter made; and, besides, with a parent a mistake is not possible, after only eight months' absence. The widow, nevertheless, entreated the father to inquire after her lost boys wherever he went. She minutely described them to him, gave him a small offering, and promised him a handsome recompense if he should succeed in finding them.

On the 25th of July, 1655, the good people of Vernon were assembled at mass in the parish church of Sainte Geneviève. During the Gospel, a mendicant entered, accompanied by a lad who appeared to be about eight years of age. Both of them, in rags and tatters, carried a beggar's wallet, and their dusty and dilapidated shoes indicated that they were on the tramp. Jeanne Vacherot happened to be in church at the time. Now the people of Vernon were perfectly aware of her having lost her two eldest boys; Jacques Le Moine, the younger of the fugitives, was born there; and many persons present had seen the child, and took an interest in his fate.

After the beggars had said a short prayer,

their eyes met Jeanne Vacherot's. She beckoned them to her, gazed hard at the lad, whispered a sentence or two in the man's ear, and then gave him a few sous by way of alms. He thanked her with a bow, and the two were soon lost in the crowd of peasants thronging round the door of the church.

This little incident, brief as it was, did not escape the notice of the congregation. When they saw the notairess conversing with the boy and the man, who appeared to be his father, the same slight resemblance which had attracted the mother also struck numerous other spectators. "'Tis little Jacques Le Moine!" was the general cry. This opinion, expressed in whispers while the service continued, burst forth into a shout when the congregation left the church. The beggar and his boy had stationed themselves at the side of the path by which people passed, in order to receive the alms of the charitable. They were soon surrounded with inquisitive gazers. Another group awaited the widow. As soon as she appeared, the ranks opened, and an empty space was left between her and the mendicants. Jeanne Vacherot passed them with indifference, little thinking that her behaviour was indignantly criticised. "You see she does not even look at him," the gossips muttered; "and yet it is little Jacques. One must be blind not to see it!"

The widow proceeded in the direction of her lodgings; the excited spectators could hold out no longer. One woman stepped up to her, and said, sharply:

"Your poor little Jacques is not in high feather, Madame la Notairess. 'Tis my idea that decent clothing and a bellyful of victuals would suit him better than the three or four sous you have given him out of charity."

Jeanne Vacherot stared at the woman with surprise; but observing that her looks were directed towards the young mendicant, she understood her meaning, and, shrugging her shoulders, replied:

"That child my poor little Jacques! My boy's nose was not so long as his. Besides, don't you see the difference of their eyes?" So saying, she walked quietly home.

Her departure gave the signal for an explosion of wrath.

"She renounces her own child!" the angry women exclaimed. "Heartless creature! Unnatural mother! Cruel parent! Did you notice the unfeeling look she gave the poor boy? She did not expect to see him back again after putting him into the beggar's hands. A nice way of providing for your children, Madame la Notairess! And you, you wretch! you child-stealer! you tool of a mother without mercy—how dare you show your villanous face where everybody knows the poor little fellow? Take yourself off, you gallows-bird! We will soon see whether this abominable stepmother means to persevere in her wicked falsehood!"

The beggar, thus assailed by the mob of furies, opened wide his eyes, not knowing what

he had done to offend them; the child, frightened, began to cry. When the man understood of what they accused him, he took the boy by the hand, and forced his way through the crowd, saying:

"You tell me, good people, that this is not my child! All I know is, that I promised my wife, when she was dying in the hospital, that I would never part with him, and I never have."

He gathered his rags about him with a hitch, and went into the town. The devotees, meanwhile, recruited to their party sundry idlers who had been attracted by the disturbance. They related, with excessive indignation, how coldly cruel the wicked mother, and how shamelessly insolent the beggar, had been. The news that little Jacques had turned up at last, and that his mother refused to acknowledge him, ran up and down the streets of Vernon. At dinner-time the popular excitement experienced a temporary lull; but when people left their homes to go to vespers, the only talk in every group was about poor little Jacques Le Moine and his cruel mother.

Meanwhile the beggar had not been wise enough to turn his back upon the infatuated town. He took up his station in a sunny corner close to the Bissi gate, where he mumbled paternosters, fearing no evil, as he held out his hand to solicit alms! Several of the morning's congregation recognised him, and in a few minutes he and the boy were surrounded by an angry crowd.

"That's he, the wretch! And the little angel deserted by his mother—what a state he is in for a rich man's orphan! Grand Dieu! Such wickedness will bring the vengeance of Heaven upon the town! Don't you know him again, the little darling? I'd put my hand into the fire if it isn't he!"

The tumult went on increasing; several bigwigs of the town came to see what was the matter, with the Procureur du Roi at their head. The gossips and noodles made way respectfully, acquainting him with their suspicions, or rather their belief. The procureur, after a glance at the lad, advanced to the man with frowning looks, and inquired:

"Who are you, sirrah? Where were you born? Where do you come from?"

"Jean Monrousseau—Limousin—from Bapaume."

"How? A Limousin from Bapaume! A pretty story! Bapaume is in the province of Artois, and you say you are a Limousin!"

"I have my papers—my certificates," said the beggar, trembling under the magistrate's eye as he produced, out of a dirty piece of cloth, two or three greasy documents.

The procureur took one of them with the tips of his fingers, opened it with evident disgust, and ran his eye through it. It was a certificate of marriage drawn up in Latin by the curé who had married him to one Jeanne Blond. The magistrate read, opening wide his eyes, "*Philippum Monrousseau et Johannam Blond,*

in nostrâ parochiali ecclesiâ, sub invocatione sancti Nicolai, per nos rectorem Michaelem Hocquet."

"And you call yourself Jean, whereas it appears your real name is Philip! This fellow can't open his mouth without telling a lie. Come here, little one; I want to speak to you."

The procureur separated the child from the beggar, and then asked him a few questions, which were repeated and commented on by fifty prating tongues: "What was his name?"—"Louis." "May be, but don't be afraid of that fellow, my little man. Your name is Jacques. Isn't your name Jacques? Don't you know some village hereabouts? Tell me; come. Bois-Hiérôme; you remember, little Jacques, Bois-Hiérôme? That's the place where you were baptised!"

The lad, frightened out of his wits, assented to everything. His name *was* Jacques; he *did* know Bois-Hiérôme. He would have agreed to any other suggestion. The Procureur du Roi concluded the interview with a masterstroke. Taking out of the child's hand a few copper coins which had been slipped into it by the charitable, he gave them to a little tailor who was bustling about and haranguing the crowd.

"Take them to the vagabond," he said, "and tell him that little Jacques Le Moine has been recognised; that he refuses to go strolling about with his false father any longer; and that he will be taken to his relations at Bois-Hiérôme."

The little tailor, proud of his mission, communicated the message to the mendicant in a tone of voice and with a few slight additions that were anything but reassuring. The poor devil, finding himself accused of some mysterious crime, and deprived of his boy by magisterial authority, was seized with a sudden and very natural panic, and, breaking through the crowd, tried to run away.

If proof were wanting, here it was—a plain confession of guilt. The innocent do not usually attempt to escape. They ran after him, and caught him without difficulty. With cuffs and curses, and all sorts of treatment, they dragged him before the Lieutenant Particulier, the Lieutenant Général being absent.

That worthy, a cousin-german of the late Lancelot Le Moine, already, according to his own opinion, sufficiently instructed in the matter by public rumour, interrogated Monrousseau with that superabundance of severity which, in France, has always been considered the surest way of reaching the truth. The beggar replied, in substance, that his name was Jean Monrousseau, the son of a stone-cutter of the Limousin; fifty years of age—at least he believed so. After being a shepherd in his youth, he had enlisted as soon as he was turned of twenty, and had taken part in the Italian and Flemish campaigns. While in garrison at Bapaume, he became acquainted with a shoemaker's widow, Jeanne Le Blond, and sought her in marriage. The nuptial benediction was

not given there, because she could not obtain the certificate of her first husband's death; but the ceremony was performed at Arras, on the 17th of May, 1642, by the curé of Saint Nicholas, Michel Hocquet, whose certificate—Greek for Monrousseau, who could not read—erroneously gave him the christian name of Philip.

As soon as he was married, Monrousseau quitted the king's service, and turned ploughman, gardener, and woodman. At Montdidier, where he resided for some time, his wife presented him with twins, who died one after the other. Thence they shifted their quarters to Neuville, where, in November, 1646, his wife was again put to bed with twins—a boy and a girl. The boy was the Louis whom they were now trying to take away from him. Impoverished by Jeanne's deplorable fecundity, they were obliged to beg for their livelihood, and Monrousseau, who bore a good character, easily obtained from the Bishop of Beauvais an authorisation to ask alms in the diocese.

From this date forward—and it was not to be wondered at—Monrousseau's memory got entangled in the marches and countermarches of his mendicant life. He had begged his way backwards and forwards throughout central France, crossing and recrossing it in various directions. In the Limousin he had lost one of his last twins—the girl; and his wife had died at the hospital at Tours, on the 10th of June, 1654. From that time he had wandered about in company with his only surviving child, Louis. He had been to Paris, and seen the Dame Le Moine there. He had left the capital to seek for harvest work in Normandy. By bad luck he had come to Vernon. Such was his statement—not given all in one breath, but torn from him bit by bit; perhaps through fear of the magistrate and the mob—the consequence of guilt, according to them. In this long examination, made up of threats and protestations, the Lieutenant Particulier noted several contradictions. Why should he call himself Philip at Arras, and Jean at Bapaume and at Vernon? He could not tell. Sometimes he had had four children at two births, sometimes only two.

His answers were not clearer nor more consistent with regard to his knowledge of the Widow Le Moine. How many times had he seen her? Only once, in the Place de Grève. But the meeting at the entrance of the Hotel Dieu? That made twice. And then he talked of another interview, a year afterwards, near the Porte Saint Martin. How many times had he been to Paris? Once only; he had left it a fortnight before coming to Vernon. He had been there twice; once during the preceding year. He had been there three times. "Take the vagabond to prison, and put him in irons," was the lieutenant's decision, on his own responsibility, without any other legal formality.

He also caused the Widow Le Moine to be arrested on his verbal order. She was marched

to his house through crowds of people storming, raging, and yelling at her. Confined in one of the lieutenant's chambers, she was confronted with the mendicant. Both persisted—he in claiming, she in denying—the parentage of the boy.

The mother was then confronted with her supposed son. The lad, previously prompted and taught his part, when pushed towards the person whom they told him was his mother, called her "Mamma." Jeanne Vacherot, whatever they could say or do, had only one reply, "That is not my child." Hardened guilt, inhumanity, unfeeling obstinacy. Shameful accusations were thrown in her teeth. The magistrate begged and entreated the widow to open her arms and her heart to the boy; but it never entered into his head to question, separately and calmly, this mother and this son whom they wanted to force upon her. If Jeanne Vacherot were really his mother—if little Monrousseau were really her son—what could be easier than to make the latter relate on the spot all the occurrences of his previous childhood? Could a boy, eleven years of age, have forgotten them after an interval of only ten months? But human fallibility cannot think of everything, not even of what is absolutely essential. The magistrate, in opening the examination, forgot that the boy, if he were Jacques Le Moine, ought to be eleven years old, and he refrained from putting him on his oath, for the reason that he was only eight, or thereabouts.

After several hours of useless torture, Jeanne Vacherot was remanded. The Lieutenant Particulier did not dare to put her in prison, as he had treated the beggar-man; but he urged her to "take counsel of the night," and ordered her to appear at a new confrontation on the morrow. The widow, after what she had seen of the magistrate and the excited populace, took counsel, not of the night, but of her own common sense; and, as soon as the house was clear, by the dispersing of the loiterers who lingered around it, she took advantage of the darkness, and started for Paris.

The events of next day proved that she had acted wisely. As soon as the news of her escape was known—and it spread like wildfire—the indignant mob, enraged at her departure, broke into the house where she had been lodging, smashed the windows, and gutted the rooms. Women, and especially mothers of families, took the lead in executing this popular vengeance.

Meanwhile, the Lieutenant Général, Louis Mordant, returned to Vernon, and took the affair out of the hands of his substitute, the Lieutenant Particulier. A regular inquiry was instituted. One-and-twenty witnesses were heard, twelve of whom were women, and all of whom stated their conviction that the beggar-boy was the widow's son. Thus, Marie Queron, servant to the Widow Cretté, with whom Jeanne Vacherot had lodged at different times during seven or eight years, having with her little

Jacques Le Moine, averred there could be no mistake about the matter—they were his eyes, his features, and his voice. It took from the 26th of July to the 12th of August to put all these depositions in order; and during the early part of that period the boy lived in the Widow Cretté's house, constantly surrounded by idle gossips who wanted to know all that was passing, and who made the child learn by rote every particular they knew.

The little tailor, François Varlot, went further than the rest: he knew how and where Monrousseau had kidnapped Jacques Le Moine. It happened in the Rue Saint Martin; the child told him so during one of his visits to the hospital. And the boy did not deny it.

They had so often talked to the lad about Bois-Hiérome, and he talked so often about it himself, that the Lieutenant Général thought fit to take him to the village. There he was recognised as the son of Lancelot Le Moine by the farmer, his mother's tenant, the curé, the Seigneur of Bois-Hiérome, the seigneur's brother, and five other inhabitants; and very soon after that by every single and married woman in the place. They made him say the name of a monastery that stood upon a neighbouring eminence. Was there not a bridge thereabouts?—"Yes, there was," he answered. "Had not my brother," the seigneur asked, "a sore place somewhere when you were here?"—"No, indeed." "Why, yes he had. Think again, my little fellow."—"Ah, yes! he had a sore place on his left hand." "I was quite sure he would recollect it." The whole concluded with a fresh examination of Monrousseau, who persisted in stating that he was the father of the boy. Neither threats nor chains could shake him a jot.

On the 12th of August, the Lieutenant Général's sentence was, that Monrousseau be kept in prison and in chains; that the child in dispute be called Jacques Le Moine, the sentence having the validity of a baptismal certificate; that the relations of the said Jacques Le Moine be convoked to appoint a guardian; a provision of a hundred livres to be assigned to him; and, to that effect, all the goods of the Widow Le Moine in the hands of her farmers to be estreated and seized. Against this sentence the widow appealed to the Parliament of Paris; which opened the door to a labyrinth of law proceedings impossible at the present day.

The Master of Requests, appointed to preside over the new inquiry, was Guillaume de Lamoignon, to whom Louis the Fourteenth, on appointing him First President, said: "If I had known an honest man than yourself, I should have put him in your place." At the very first interview he drew from the mendicant, the boy, and Jeanne Vacherot, answers which could leave no doubt respecting the prejudice, the precipitation, and the blindness of the Vernon worthies. Examined by a magistrate who heard what he said without threatening him, Monrousseau told his tale. Lamoignon could make

allowance for the contradictions and errors of detail inseparable from such a vagabond existence, at a time, too, when the registers and certificates of ecclesiastics offered no guarantee for their accuracy.

Brought together, the mendicant and the boy acknowledged each other, without hesitation, as father and son. The widow declared, in the most calm and natural way, that the child was not hers.

"But if this lady is your mother," said Lamoignon to the boy, "why not avow it? You can do so without the slightest danger either to yourself, to her, or to the man."

"She is not my mother," the boy replied. "My mother died in the hospital at Tours."

"But wouldn't you like to be the son of this lady? You would be much better off; you wouldn't have to beg your bread from town to town."

"I should very well like to be her son, but I am not."

"Then beggar you are, and beggar you will remain."

"What must be, must."

"You are willing, then, to return to Monrousseau, and beg with him?"

"I cannot help it, since he is my father. I cannot turn my back on him."

One detail struck Lamoignon, which the Vernon people either could not or would not see. The beggar-boy could neither read nor write. Now, amongst the papers relating to the children's disappearance, Lamoignon found a certificate from one Gabriel Alexander, a writing-master, stating that the boys could read and write, and knew the rudiments of Latin. The result of the new inquiry was a Decree in Council, dated 2nd June, 1656, sending the parties before the Parlement of Paris to receive judgment on the whole matter.

Scarcely a week after the decree was made, there happened one of those theatrical events which so rarely occur soon enough in the dramas of human justice. The absurdity of the Vernon folk was manifested by the reappearance of the elder of the missing boys, Pierre Le Moine. He told the sad and silly story of his running away with his brother and the two young Coustards, and their parting with the latter. He and Jacques, as soon as they were alone together, directed their steps towards Vernon; but whether through false shame or fear, they gave no sign of life to their friends, and pursued their way, begging, as far as Saint Waast. There, a gentleman of the name of De Montaud saw that, in spite of their rags and haggard looks, they were children of gentle birth. For twelve days he fed and lodged them, when the younger, Jacques Le Moine (whom everybody at Vernon recognised in the

beggar-boy Monrousseau), fell ill and died. He was buried in the cemetery of the church of Saint Waast by the brothers of charity.

In confirmation of his tale, Pierre produced two certificates signed by the curé, the vicaire (curate), the charitable gentleman, several parishioners, and the brothers who had interred poor little Jacques. Pierre continued to reside in M. De Montaud's house for some time after his brother's death, until, yielding to his passion for a vagabond life, he ran away, and took to begging as before. Tired at last of such a wretched existence, or yielding to the voice of reason and duty, he resolved to go and throw himself into his mother's arms.

She greatly needed some such comfort. She was now, as far as she knew, utterly childless, for she had lost, by illness, her youngest boy, Louis, the one who had never left her. But what a strange picture of the state of France in the middle of the seventeenth century! Here were two boys, vagabonding about for a couple of years, without the police, to whom the mother had notified her loss, taking the trouble to find them out. And here was a gentleman, a curé, a religious company, harbouring those children, burying one of them, and witnessing the disappearance of the other, without acquainting the authorities or writing to the family!

It was not until Thursday in Passion Week, 1659, that the First President de Lamoignon pronounced a judgment ordaining Jean Monrousseau to be liberated from prison, and his name erased from the jailer's book; that Louis Monrousseau should recognise and obey him as his father (to be sent to the hospital, nevertheless, to be fed and brought up *like the others*); and that all the goods estreated and seized for Jacques Le Moine's benefit should be restored to Jeanne Vacherot.

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THE DEAR GIRL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BELLA DONNA," "NEVER FORGOTTEN," &c.

CHAPTER XIV. WARNINGS.

LUCY slept very sweetly, had charming dreams, and rose very happy. The opinion was universally entertained of her next morning, that she was a knowing young thing, and had not been trained in an Anglo-French school for nothing. Her tactics were perfectly known. Was it not a painful thing to see a girl of that age brought up so by that rap of an Irish father, who was teaching her to keep two lovers, both old enough to be her father, in play at the same time? The dark looks of the dragon of a sister had not been unnoticed, and the stupid child had better have chosen another time to play off her tricks. But what was this to the feeling when it got known that she had gone to meet this officer at Sody's, and had brought him off, and fixed him happily at lodgings exactly opposite their own house! This effrontery and cold strategy seemed shocking in a child of her years; and female moralists, over their morning café au lait, might be excused auguring the worst. Indeed, it must be said her behaviour had an air of fitfulness and coquetry; but then we know perfect innocence and *real* simplicity will do things of the most awkward kind. The truth was, she had taken her explanation with Mr. West literally. Their explanation had made everything clear to her. In time—years to a young girl—she was to learn how to admire and love him. And he enjoyed such an exemption from the follies and passions of the young, was so moderate, and had such an interest for what was her interest, that—in short, the understanding between them was complete and clear. In the interval she did not understand that she was to lock up her sympathies in the good and amiable.

It was a wild lead-coloured day. It had been a stormy night, and the wind had not gone down. The sea-wind was very unwelcome at the colony, and at every corner lay in wait, cold, searching, and betraying the nearness of the monster from whose bosom it came. The colonists kept close on these visitations. From being a bright, sparkling place glittering like a pinchbeck article de Paris in Blum's window,

the little town changed like a chameleon, becoming dull and slate-colour, shrinking, shivering, wrapping itself close in its sad-coloured paletot. Lucy was looking out from her window a little disconsolately (for this dusty day had a corresponding effect on her father's temper, bringing the whole train of gloomy forebodings, depression, ill humour, and the very worst visions of ruin and despair), when a visitor was announced.

Miss West stood before her. That lady's appearance made Lucy wonder, she always regarding her with a curious feeling of awe and repulsion. The day, too, was not one of her days. To her surprise, she came up to her with affectionate haste, and an air of interest that seemed like a sunbeam playing on a bit of ice. She sat down beside Lucy, asked about her father; had she been down to the port? with the usual conventional questions, but said nothing of the last night.

"Gilbert has not been here? Well, I suppose he will be, later. He has a deep interest in you—deeper, perhaps, than you can suspect, or perhaps understand."

Lucy answered gravely: "I value and esteem his goodness and kindness to me. And I don't know how—I may be too young to have the power of conveying this as strongly as I ought."

"It is not that," said Miss West, quickly; "speeches are not what we want, though it is not so much your fault. Girls just entering on the world are taught to suppose one man as charming as another, and as so many partners in a night's dance, the last is always the finest and best."

Lucy's eyes widened. "I don't understand why you say this to me, Miss West."

"Why? You have wit enough to know. This is no little matter for acting. You should be told that Gilbert's is not one of those cheap natures to be treated in *that* way. His is no trifler's heart, but the noblest and most precious. He is *everything* to me. We are only two in this world. I don't know how to measure my words either; but I cannot look on and see his happiness and our happiness wrecked."

She spoke in such growing agitation, that Lucy found herself looking at her with wonder and awe. She was a child in experience and training, as she had been told, though she had not a child's heart.

"Why should you think me so wicked?" she

answered, "or so cruel? I have some honour, at least—some faith."

"No, it is not *that*. You think this some light matter, as girls do one of those wretched little flirting triumphs. You would be pleased to see him coming here day after day, and would be proud to show your friends that you have one like him interested in you, while *you* amuse yourself. Vanity enters into these things, as I know, in this wretched place, where a true heart is as rare as a real diamond on the necks of the creatures here."

Lucy, as we have seen, was quick and impetuous. "What have I done?" said she, warmly, "or what am I going to do? What are those dangers?" He would smile if I were to tell him this. I know his indulgent friendship."

"Friendship!" repeated the other, with infinite scorn. "Is this innocence or artfulness? But you are not dull. I don't know how to reach your heart. I know I am blunt; but leave me out of the matter. Think of him. Once he sets his mind on a thing, he casts his whole life and destiny with it. Only a day or two ago he comes to me in the most abject misery, and says he will leave this place and go back to the world. I was in such joy, for I knew that would be the saving of him. Well, a letter comes, and all is changed. He will stay here, and is in spirits again. And you talk of friendship! Do you take me for a child? I know I am an old maid, as they call it—always will be; and have only that one object to love or look to—only him!"

She looked so wistfully, that Lucy—who, Mr. Dacres said, enthusiastically, "had the fiery Dacres' blood boiling through her little veins, sir"—restrained that little impetuosity which was strong in her, and was quite softened, when a minute before she was inclined to do battle. She took the other's hands, and said, eagerly:

"Dear Miss West, now don't trouble your heart any longer, for I can tell you how it all stands. I would not see you so distressed for the whole world; and I can tell you in two words. That is——" and she started, stopped, and remained silent, for she recollected the engagement she had made with Gilbert.

"Well?" said the other, her hard brow contracting.

"No," said Lucy, impetuously. "I cannot now. All I can say is, I will behave with honour and true faith."

"Ah!" said Miss West, rising, "just what I expected; just what I warned him of. Let him boast to me of his wisdom and experience, who would place all his safety and happiness in the hands of a child! God help us, indeed! Ah, miss, I see your game. Take care what you are going to do, or what you attempt. I warn you. Be cautious. I shall watch you from day to day, and if any ill or anything wrong comes of this business, you will repent it, child as you are, as sure as my name is Margaret West. You don't know me. Twenty years ago there was an adventuress who tried the same experi-

ment with his trusting and generous nature; but I saved him. God gave me strength to save him and to punish her. So take care!"

She spoke with an extraordinary fierceness and determination; the colour, even, had come into her pale dry cheek. But Lucy had plenty of spirit, "the old Dacres' spirit," if we like to call it so.

"What do you mean?" said Lucy, looking at her with astonishment and quivering lip. "You may warn me and watch me as much as you please. I invite it. I am not in the least afraid. I am honest, and will look you in the face straight at any time. If I am a child, as you are so fond of repeating, I have no child's heart. I have not sought you, nor your family; they have sought me. I could say who is childish to-day. Mr. West is above these unworthy suspicions and threats—yes, threats," added Lucy, very calmly; "if he were aware of what you have said to me to-day——"

"He knows nothing—not a word, as I live."

"If I were to tell him, you know perfectly the effect it would have on him. But I would disdain such a thing. Yet I do not know if it be my duty. You—a lady—to come here and threaten!"

"I—I mean it all for his sake. You cannot blind me. I know what is going on, and your father's schemes. We have friends in England."

"I will not listen to you," said Lucy, the tears almost forcing themselves to her eyes. "How dare you speak thus about *him*? But I despise it all. I court your watchings and warning, and shall behave exactly as suits my own dignity and honour. I shall make no terms. What if things do turn out so dreadfully as you suppose? I dare say they will. I cannot help it. Your brother will understand it all. I shall not be afraid to meet you, if you are bold enough to venture to bring me to account. There's a challenge, Miss West, for yours; and I must tell you I think it ungenerous of you to come in this way to our house, and speak so to a poor girl."

"I told you I did not mean to offend or to hurt you, and, if I have done so, I am sorry for it; but I must warn you again that I am in earnest."

Again the old flash of the Dacres was in Lucy's eyes. Miss Pringle had seen it often, and though she announced that she "would eradicate the seeds of temper," she had failed, and had been clearly worsted in some contests whose incidents were rather unseemly. The girl all but struck her own dress impatiently with her hand.

The other stood irresolute, her face working.

"I love my brother," she said, "more than one should do in this miserable world, though he, perhaps, does not think it; and would not wish to see him suffer. But," she continued, half sorrowfully, "things may take their course until his eyes are opened, miserably—which assuredly they will be, one day."

Our Lucy walked up and down a long time after that little scene—her first dramatic scene in

life, and in which, too, she had acquitted herself with credit. She felt pride that she had proved herself equal to that bitter, wicked campaigner, who was double her size and strength. She was "a young thing," and had a natural pride in her victory. But she knew nothing of the little hair-springs and cog-wheels and endless mechanism of the human heart, or she would have felt that this assault, aimed really at her client, had made her more than ever his protector. Nay, she resented the ill-judged attempt to dispossess him, and advance another. Unconsciously, she found herself resisting what was so awkwardly being forced upon her.

Miss West went home, through the cold searching winds, which made her thin chest shrink and shiver. She found her brother still busy with his papers. She had not seen him all the morning. His eyes were bright; his forehead clear. The weather had no effect on him; yet she realised, with a pang, there had been a time when it deepened his melancholy. Now he was secure.

"My dear Margaret," he said, cheerfully, "are you ready for a secret? I have been turning a plan over all last night. You know I should have to go home next month to look after our business. Well, I have made up my mind to go at once. It is only anticipating a little."

"Go at once!" she repeated. "Why?"

"Oh, many whys and many wherefores. I have all sorts of things to do, though I shall be a very short time away. I shall go to-night. I may as well."

"Go to-night! What is the meaning of all this?" She spoke with a sort of hopelessness, for she knew it was idle opposing him.

"Because I shall be back the sooner. I shall go straight to Westown—the old house."

"Why, you told me you could not endure to go within twenty miles of it—that your heart would sink——"

"Ah, then; yes. But it must be done at some time, and it is as well to get over such fancies. I'll make a plunge, Margery. The poor old place must be in an awful state of decay. I'll get some clever fellow to go down to repair and beautify."

"I know the reason of this folly," she said, impatiently.

"No folly, indeed, if you knew all."

"If I knew all?"

"Ah, you know very little, Margery; forgive your brother for telling you so. Then, there is that poor Dacres and his affairs; he is such a muddler. I am convinced he is well off, this moment, if only some sensible man——"

"Like you. Oh, I lose all patience. You, indeed, going off to settle their business! They have finely entrapped you!"

"Now, Margaret," he said, coldly, "I warned you about this. At our last conversation on that subject, I told you I could hear no more. My mind is made up."

"But you must hear me, Gilbert. She no more cares for you than——All last night she was flirting, yes, like any——"

"Like any girl," he said, smiling, "with the lean Frenchmen there, I suppose. Just what I would expect, and like to see. Wherever she goes, she must be admired."

"But—but——Oh, I see, it is quite hopeless. Nothing will change you; you are so infatuated. But you will suffer for this."

The anxious sisterly heart had checked itself—she could not bring herself to do more than hint about last night. She could not so madly break up his fool's paradise.

"My dear Margery," he added, kindly, "do you come with me, to look after me, and keep me out of these follies which you think I am sure to fall into. We shall have a very pleasant little expedition together."

At first she gave a start of delight. Then the vision of the designing girl, left behind, unchecked, unwatched, rose before her, and she said, firmly,

"No, I must stay behind here."

He tried to persuade; but she grew obstinate.

He walked down to Mr. Dacres, the schemes he had thus so lightly epitomised to her floating in his head. He found Mr. Dacres cold physically, and morally desponding.

"Ah! West, *here's* a hole to be put down in!"

The summer of a life, the prime of a man's days, slipping from him in a den. I shall die here, like a poisoned rat in a hole, as that beggar Swift said. What a mind, what a tongue, that fellow had! When I want to rake some scoundrel of a witness fore and aft, sir, I read over a page of the immortal boy before going into court. I used to read. Ah! my friend, those days are numbered with the past. Well, sir, what's the best news with you?"

"I called in to tell you that I am going away for a short time."

"The deuce you are!" said Mr. Dacres, turning on him sharply, as he would on a witness suddenly discovered to be hostile.

"What's that for, Mr. West?"

"Well, chiefly for you and Miss Lucy; and I have mapped out the whole thing, and I want some information from you."

Then he proceeded to unfold his plans—the restoration of the family place—and added:

"You are very clever, but, I think, not the man exactly to deal with these sharks and Jews. I am accustomed to business, and a friend could make better terms. We will get you quite free, and start you fair again."

Dacres replied, with deep emotion, "West, you've a fine nature, and a delicate one, which I like better. I am not, indeed, up to these things. Would I were going with you! To be sure—yes! Why couldn't we start together?"

"That would destroy everything," said Mr. West, firmly. "No! There's Sir John Trotter; I am sure I know people that know him."

"Oh! my dear fellow, this overpowers me. Why, how shall I ever——"

"No thanks. To tell you the truth, this is not so much for you——"

"Ah! I know it is not," said the other, slyly. "Don't tell me, my boy! Don't. And she

deserves it—a diamond fit for a Jew. The wealth of Araby spread out at her feet, gold, incense, and myrrh, Golconda, and the rest of it, not one *bit* too much. She deserves it all, every halfpenny.”

“I know,” said Mr. West, interrupting these paternal raptures. “And I must bind you, most solemnly, not to breathe a word to *her*. I make this a point, and a solemn condition.”

“Will you have an oath?” said Mr. Dacres, with alacrity; “any one that’s binding on my conscience; kiss the book, sir. Hush! by the powers, here she is; not a word. It will only fetter and constrain her, the dear child! Well, Lulu, pet, how is poor mamma? Poor Mrs. D., sir, has a touch of the browns, sir; this blackguard weather always brings it to her. Heaven forgive me! I haven’t seen her since morning.” And, with great delicacy, Mr. Dacres withdrew.

Lucy started when she saw the brother whose sister had visited her in the morning. Mr. West’s bright face, however, and cordial manner relieved her.

“I hope you enjoyed yourself last night, and always will when I am away.”

Again she started.

“Going away? Why, what’s the reason? Oh, you are not angry——”

“Angry,” he said, smiling. “No, I *must* go on family business. I shall not be long, so you will have a short holiday. And, now, will you promise me one thing—two things? First, to write to me very often.”

“Indeed I shall,” said she; “every day, if you wish.”

“No. Only when you have something to tell me—how you are getting on; how you are amusing yourself. And that brings me to my second request, that you *do* amuse yourself; see people you like; go to parties—what are called by courtesy, parties—as much as you can; just as if, in short——”

“I know what you mean, perfectly,” said Lucy, with her little air of confidence. “I remember our agreement. Surely,” she said, with some colour, “if I were to meet some poor soul who had suffered a great deal, and tried to soothe and comfort, to distract their thoughts, to listen to them, you would not think——”

“Just what I would wish you to do, and what I would expect from the gentle nature of Lucy Dacres.”

“If I spoke kindly to him——”

“*Him?*” repeated Mr. West, a little absently.

“Yes; to some poor wanderer over the face of the earth, like the Wandering Jew, you would not say I was a flirt?”

“No, my dear child,” said he, smiling. “But where are these Jews and helpless creatures to come from? I dare say I shall see more Jews than you. Ah! I know! Tell me, has my sister been with you?”

Lucy looked, confused, down on the ground. What sagacity and penetration he had! She admired him now. He rose up in some agitation.

“I knew this; I suspected this. This is what I shall leave behind. But don’t mind her; she means well, poor soul. It is all her love for me, which I do not deserve. She is indiscreet, soured if you like, and takes what she thinks to be the best way to advance my interest. I am sorry for this, deeply. She thinks the old-fashioned style to be the right way—a girl to be moping in a corner. Don’t mind her. Promise me.”

“You are so noble and so generous!” said Lucy, enthusiastically. “I promise you everything.”

He looked at her with great interest, and took her hand.

“I shall be back very soon. You know who is your friend—your true friend. And if there is any little difficulty——We shall have a breezy passage to-day; but that is what I like. They should have made me a sailor. Good-bye, dearest. Remember, write pretty often when you are in the humour, and, above all things, *amuse* yourself.”

Lucy’s face quite fell as she thought of losing her friend. “It is so sudden,” she said, “and so unkind of you!”

He went down the stairs, a little troubled. “What man but myself would do such a thing? But I am right. Yes. She shall be perfectly free. She shall come to me, not I to her.” The ugly thought, which he disliked, was still before him. “Old enough to be her father.”

His foot was on the last step, when a very handsome man—Spanish-looking—well dressed, distinguished, passed him with a bow, and went up-stairs. Mr. West looked after him, wondering. Then he looked up at the window. Lulu was waving her hand to him energetically, and his countenance cleared again in a moment. But the waving was interrupted, and the bright figure of “Lulu” had darted away from the window.

Alas! all that night, in the dull-lit cabin, when the steamer was plunging, rocking, creaking, heaving, groaning, roaring, that interrupted salutation would come back on him, and make him uneasy with many a pang.

CHAPTER XV. STORM.

FOR two days the gale continued at the little town, neither increasing nor subsiding. In the morning, as in the evening, the air was of the cold bluish-slate colour, and in the streets, in the shops where the owners sat, uncomfortable, with their doors fast closed, and doing no business, was heard the roar and tumbling of the breakers as at the back of a wall. No one went abroad, except a few enthusiasts, who would not give up their day’s walk, and who, having trudged to the top of the great cliffs, after being blown about, struggling with their hats, staggering to keep their feet, came down with news that the sight from thence was “awfully grand,” the sea far out in angry mist, and breaking and roaring in on the shore like a furious demon. No ships were seen.

Even the old Eagle, the daily boat, a stout, clumsy, dowdy packet that would bear any rude treatment, did not ply. The colony seemed a city of the dead, the little streets were empty. Sharp faces, with a pinched and desolate expression, peered out from the little windows hopelessly.

The way in which this change affected Mr. Dacres was almost pitiable. He lay in a chair, on a sofa, in the most miserable state of despondency, asking, over and over again, had he been born for this sort of thing—a man of his genius, wit, and parts. What was to become of him?—the bright hours of life passing away, the prizes slipping from him, and he would die in this miserable “expatriation.” Mr. Vivian came over again and again. Lucy was delighted with her new friend; to her the state of the weather was a purely indifferent thing. Happy those independent of such paltry influences! He was well read, fond of music, poetry, and what not; and Lucy, at her humble instrument, was happy to play and even sing for him, according to the instruction received at Miss Pringle’s from M. Pontet, the master at that establishment.

“I ought to be gone to-day,” said the colonel, “and yet I shall confess I am not sorry for this forced delay—”

“But why must you go?” said Lucy; “you might stay for the week, at least.”

“I shall be here again very soon,” he said. “I must come by this way shortly.” And he sighed and looked down.

“Why?” said Dacres, looking at him curiously, as if he were a witness.

“There is a dismal beat,” said the officer, coldly, “on which I must walk—for many years, I dare say.”

It came to be the third day. The night had been very stormy indeed, and tenants of the “little crockery” houses of the town (so an indignant colonist called them) were kept awake by angry roaring and moaning, and the sound of tiles bursting from the roof and clattering noisily down the street. When the dawn came, the streets were as clean and dry as though sweepers had been at work all night; the slate-colour had gone, and it was very dark and gloomy. There was a mysterious stillness along that flat, sandy, dismal track, which, for many miles, edges the French coast. The long avenue made by the two wooden piers was strained and cracking; and the fishermen, standing about idly, prophesied it would not bear much more. None of the boats were out. There was the *Hélène*, belonging to this port, and which was due in a day or two. Every one knew Captain Muret; none better than Madame Muret, in an old nightcap, who harangued the fishermen, now and again, that he would never put out in such weather. Muret had risen from the ranks, was the only fisherman of the place who was actually commander and part owner of a brig some three hundred tons burden. No wonder they had interest in Muret, or thought that the *Hélène* was the only vessel in the trade.

Captain Filby was out on this day. Strange to say, his spirits were not affected by this weather. He did not call it a “hole of a place.” He seemed rather to get respect for it. “A fine, bracing, hearty day, like one of our honest English gales. I didn’t think they had it in ’em. To see these creatures skulking and shivering about; they’re only half men.” Captain Filby even trudged vigorously to the top of the cliffs, and looked down over the tremendous scene, to where an awful black heavy curtain, charged with horror and destruction, was hanging over the English coast. “How they’re catching it over there!” he said. As he was looking, and holding on to his hat, he saw a black object far out at sea; it was coming on fast, and growing larger. “A ship, I declare,” he said, and got out his glass.

He watched it for a long time, and saw that it was a brig, labouring to keep well out. She had suffered a great deal, and her “poles” were bare enough.

“You won’t do it, my lads,” said the captain, coolly, “even if you are British; which I doubt. You have a finicking look about you.”

The captain came down leisurely, walked round by the port, and recognised a thin gendarme who was shivering in a doorway, feeling every blast of the wind like a stab, and told him there was a ship off the coast. Presently a motley crowd went down to the pier, and under shelter of a wall peeped out at the solitary vessel. It was now in far closer. Never is the struggle that rages between man and nature brought to such a satisfactory issue as in a storm. It is a fair battle, and in most instances, if not surprised, man wins. The boat was drawing nearer and nearer, and a clever young fisherman, with sharp eyes, made out, as it had been suspected from the first, that it was the *Hélène*, the cherished boat with Captain Muret on board. That news soon spread, and servants rushing up-stairs into dismal little rooms, with a dramatic tossing of arms and appeals to the “bon Dieu!” and tragic faces over the “poor children” who were being “assassinated” on the water. Tourlou, the oldest fisherman, said, confidently, that in about half an hour or forty minutes it would be all over!

Our Lucy was sitting in their little drawing-room with her mamma. “Papa Harco” was in bed, “not well; but I suppose it will end, one of these days!” He had “something on his chest,” he thought. Vivian was there, as usual, now reading, now talking, while Lucy and her mamma worked. It was about four o’clock, and Papa Harco was “thinking of getting upon his legs,” when with tears pouring down her cheeks the little landlady opposite burst in, and said that there was the most hideous misery going on down at the port; that the “poor children” were there in close on shore, perishing before our eyes; and that Jaques and the whole town was up there, looking on, and could do nothing.

“What!” said Vivian, excited, “is she gone ashore?”

But the little landlady could give no details. "I shall go out and see," he said, rising. "One might give a little advice. The French are so dull in everything about the sea. I shall be back in half an hour."

He went out. Lucy sat at the window. Half an hour went by, and he did not return. What was the meaning of this? There was no one to ask; for the whole town had gone up to the port.

As Vivian was going down to the port, he fell in with three sailors, whose dress, build, and bearing told him they were English seamen. They were coming out of the Nancy Baker, of Hull, who had brought coals for a factory that was some way from the town. They had just returned, and were going up where all the world were going. Vivian spoke to one, who proved to be the mate, a quiet, stolid young fellow, of about five-and-thirty, and whom he heard the men call John Davy. Davy said it was going to be a poor business, he was afraid.

They went along the wooden pier, past the large crucifix more than seven feet high, all gilt and painted, set up by the fishermen, and round whose foot was a whole cluster of praying women. Was there not here Jean's sister—he was in the *Hélène*—and Paul's wife, and many more distracted creatures, and the captain's own wife, the most collected and confident of them all, looking out, with her hands shading her eyes, to that eternal sheet of dull terrible slate, which was now and again lit up with flashes of white? There was a fringe of eager, painful faces, bent forward and looking out into the storm, with clasped hands and strained eyes, thus getting into the front. The present state of things was this: The brig was in a poor way, indeed, for there it lay, not two hundred yards away, grounded on the flat Dieppe shore, the bathers' paradise—a miserable black tenement, now visible, now swallowed up and devoured by an overwhelming rush of waves, which, when they retired, showed a black ragged mast and a few figures like flies hanging on it. At every disappearance there was a shriek and a wail from the shore; at every reappearance another cry and wail. "Oh, they will save them—they must save them!" Colonel Vivian heard some one say confidently, as they came up.

But these attempts were of the feeblest sort. They had tried to launch a boat, though no one had volunteered to go in it, and it was smashed into firewood at one crash against the pier. "It is hopeless—it is madness," said the French sailors, gloomily pointing to the fragments. Others had brought a rope to the cliffs, and were going through a laborious show of flinging it out. There were preparations of the same description being made with the same elaborate show, and to an enormous amount of gesticulation and chatter. John Davy gave one rapid glance up and down, took all in—the broken boat, the ropes—"with half an eye," and said aloud:

"Well, of all the Jack-a-donkeys I ever see! Why, they might as well throw them out a spool of cotton!"

There was an official air over the whole, also, for here were gendarmes and the mayor fussing about and directing, though there was nothing to be directed, and taking notes for the "verbal process" of the whole, which he would address to the prefect.

"Why," said Davy, "the men'll be lost afore their eyes while they are busy with their pack-thread. There's another of 'em off. I give 'em twenty minutes, and where will they be?"

"In God's name!" cried Vivian, growing excited, "can nothing be done? You are English sailors—I'll do what I can, if I only knew the way."

"Bill!" said Davy to his mate. "Our big boat might do it. I wouldn't be afraid to put her to it. We might coax her along 'tween the piers. She's broad and bluff enough; but there's only three on us."

"Well, I'll go too," said Vivian, growing more and more excited. "I could pull an oar with any man."

In a moment Vivian was explaining to the mayor what they were going to try. In a very few moments more nearly every one there knew that the brave Englishmen were going to do something—something, as the French there understood by instinct, that was very likely to succeed: for they had much confidence in the gifts of the islanders.

In another moment Davy and his mates were running to the Nancy Baker, had cast off her dirty, clumsy, broad, but serviceable boat, and had paddled, still within shelter of the pier, to a ladder which led down to the water.

"Now, my hearties," cried Davy from his boat, "who'll volunteer? There's room for two more."

Vivian, standing at the top of the ladder, hurriedly explained to the mayor what was wanted. The fishermen, the women, were all crowding on them, chatting, praying, pointing. The mayor turned to them, and began leisurely, and with a sort of dramatic gesture, to address them:

"Messieurs——"

But the Englishmen interrupt him bluntly—Davy with the oath of his country, and Vivian with:

"Encore deux places!" And he pointed below to the boat.

There was a death-like stillness, not a motion nor a sound.

"You are brave Frenchmen! We are four English about to try and save your countrymen. We cannot do it alone. You will help us, I know?"

There was another pause, a fresh stillness.

"Cowards!" said Davy from the boat. "I thought they were better men."

"Then we go alone," said Vivian, and turned to descend.

But they were not cowards. A dozen fishermen had rushed forward.

* * *

Vivian felt a light hand on his arm, and looked round, astonished.

"You here?" he cried.

A gentle face, its veil blown about by the gale, was looking up into his. It was pale and wistful.

"I would not stop you. Not for the whole world! It is indeed noble of you. I heard it all. God will watch over you and protect you."

"Ah," said Vivian, "if you were to know how happy and confident I feel! We shall do better now that you are looking on. *Now!* Come, friends, take your places. Davy, you pull stroke. I sit next you. You direct us."

Was it not like a blissful ray of the sun, and a sudden lulling of the winds and waves, as the hapless figures on the wreck saw the little black speck emerge swiftly from the piers? But how many perils were before them! what chances! for all the cruel imps of death were between them, floating like sharks.

Lucy, her hands all but clenched together, and, indeed, not so much thinking of her friend as of the superb devotion and splendid sacrifice of the whole, stood following them with her eyes, and a little gasp on her lips every time they sank down in the waves. Turning round for a minute, she found herself all but alone; for the whole crowd was on its knees apart, at the feet of the great crucifix. With a swift flutter she had joined them, and poured out her little soul in the most passionate entreaties. Even Captain Filby was heard to say, later:

"Begad, sir! I took off my hat, and prayed like a trooper!"

Some one gave a cry, and they were all on their feet again. The boat had been struck, as if by the fin of a whale, by a huge wave, and had filled. Here was an oar gone; one of the Frenchmen beaten nearly senseless; Davy waving his arms, the others stooping and trying to bale out the water. Again are the wistful faces and stooped figures bent forward. "They are lost! O mon Dieu! they will never accomplish it." They are at work again, now going forward a foot, now beaten back a dozen yards, whilst Davy, who has become coxswain, watched to give notice of the coming waves. They were not taking the direct course for the wreck. Again were there cries, "They will miss her; they will be carried out to sea; they have lost control." But an old French salt saw what Davy's plan was—to get to leeward of the wreck. At last, after about an hour's hard work, they succeeded.

It had grown dark, lanterns were brought down; but the spectacle was one of such absorbing interest that, had it lasted till midnight, the lookers-on could never have tired. The "Phare," faithless and theatrical guide, was blazing away, as if to mock the poor lost victims. As the heavy boat was carried within a few yards of the wreck, they were called on to throw themselves into the water, and were thence dragged out by hair, or hand, or any way. Three were lost, but five got safely into the boat. It was so dark, those on shore could not tell what was going on, and indeed presently lost sight of boat and all. Then agitation rose. But they had to wait an

hour more for the return. And oh! when there was a rush of lanterns to the pier, and the clumsy craft, crowded with figures, came suddenly out of the darkness, and swept by on the top of a great green wave like a hill, actually on a level with the top of the pier, a shout was raised that reached to the back streets of the town. The rare, gallant English sailors! Though a thousand stupid things be associated with the English abroad, a thousand such heroic deeds as this have redeemed them.

If there were prayers and gesticulations before, what was there now, as the noble fellows, drenched and beaten out of all human shape, staggered up? But the two who came last had to drag up an insensible figure, the slightest and tallest. A girl in a black silk dress, pale with cold, terror, and anxiety, stooping forward in the crowd, as he was laid on the ground, saw that it was what she dreaded, and gave a cry of despair and agony. "The poor child," said a tender-hearted fishwife; "it is her sweetheart! But, my God! what is that to those who have lost brothers, fathers, and husbands on this terrible night?"

ITALIAN ACADEMIES AND UNIVERSITIES.

SICILY claims the palm for having the first university in Italy. To Frederick the Second, King of Sicily, is the honour due of introducing the Italian language at his court (A.D. 1218). His courts at Naples and Palermo were the rendezvous of men of talent and of genius. In 1224, he founded the University of Naples, which soon flourished in that populous city; he opened various schools at Palermo and in other cities of Sicily; he reorganised the academy of Salerno—an academy of medicine, founded, it is supposed, by the Moors in the tenth century.

The Crusades, which threw open the East to the populations of the West, unfolding to the admiring gaze of the less cultivated Europeans the treasures and the masterpieces of Greek literature and art, a school of jurisprudence established at Bologna, in which Irnerio (or Guarnerio) expounded the Roman law, and Guido Aretino a new system of music, led to the establishment of academies and universities in other cities of Italy. From 1314 to 1334 we find Cino di Pistoja lecturing at the universities of Perugia and Florence, and afterwards at Bologna, where Petrarch and Boccaccio were among his pupils. Giovanni Andrea, who, according to Tiraboschi, is the greatest lawyer that ever lived, was holding a course of lectures. His daughter Novella was so well instructed by her father that at times she used to lecture in his stead. On these occasions she sat behind a small curtain, that the attention of the students might not be distracted by her great beauty. In April, 1361, Boccaccio was sent on a special mission to Petrarch by the republic of Florence, offering him the chancellorship of the university

there. The Greek professorship at Florence was in 1363 conferred upon a Greek, on the recommendation of Boccacio. Leonzio Pilato was a man, according to Boccacio's description, of repugnant aspect and horrible features. He wore a long tangled beard, matted, as was his black, uncombed hair; he shunned all society; he possessed, however, a perfect knowledge of the language and literature of the Greeks, and was a pupil of the celebrated Barlaam. For two years he expounded the works of Homer, and translated the *Odyssey* and *Iliad* into Latin.* The revival of Greek literature is owing in a great measure to him and to the encouragement he received from his two patrons, Boccacio and Petrarch. This was the first chair of Greek literature established in Italy. At a great expense, Boccacio collected all the Greek manuscripts he could hear of, and for three years studied assiduously under Pilato. In Petrarch's letters to Boccacio there are many passages which throw considerable light upon this interesting subject. In a letter, dated 5th March, 1364, he thus describes to Boccacio the departure of Leonzio. "This Leonzio, notwithstanding my entreaties, more obdurate than the rocks he is about to encounter, left me shortly after your departure. Fearing lest, from continual intercourse with him, I should catch his ill humour—for the infirmities of the mind are as contagious as those of the body—I let him go, and gave him a Terence to beguile him on the way, a book of which he seemed especially fond, though I cannot explain what this most melancholy Greek has in common with that most lively African; so true it is that there are no dissimilarities that have not some point of resemblance. He embarked, uttering in my presence a thousand imprecations against Italy and the Latin name. He could scarcely have landed in Greece when I received a letter from him more rugged and of greater length than his beard, in which he lauds Italy above the skies, utters maledictions against Constantinople, and entreats me to invite him back, in terms of supplication such as Peter used when he found he was sinking." Leonzio perished on his way back.

Filippo Villani, who wrote *The Lives of Illustrious Florentines*, was in 1404 appointed public lecturer on Dante, at Florence.

The student of Italian literature will be astonished to find that the Italian language, which, in the fourteenth century, as poets, Dante and Petrarch had cultivated with so much elegance, and which Boccacio had raised almost to perfection by his tales in prose, should have become suddenly neglected and have fallen almost into decay. For nearly one hundred years after the death of Boccacio, which took place on the 21st December, 1375, no author of any eminence wrote in the Italian dialect. This is explained by the memorable events which occurred in the first part of the fifteenth

century. The great schism in the Church of Rome, which led to the Reformation, the art of printing discovered in Germany, and almost immediately transplanted to Italy, by increasing the copies of the ancient classics, the fall of the Eastern Empire,* and the consequent migration of many Greeks into Italy, gave an impulse to the study of Greek literature. The discoveries of Vasco di Gama,† of a new world by Columbus (1494), attracted the attention of the learned to scientific investigations. Libraries were established for public use, universities founded, professorships instituted.‡

But it must not be supposed that the Italian language was entirely forgotten. If men of learning and science preferred the idiom of the Greeks and Latins, the people learned by heart the verses of the Divine Comedy and the sonnets of Petrarch. Whilst the stately sage or assiduous student pored over Greek and Latin manuscripts, the light-hearted gondolier, on the other hand, hummed the ditties of Petrarch as he plied his oar, or sang them under the balcony of his mistress; and the muleteer, as he led his string of mules up the steep ascent of the Apennines, pondered over the mysteries of *Il Libro*; whilst the Hundred Tales elicited many an uproarious burst of laughter from the gay and thoughtless bachelor.

The works of Aristotle, Plato, Homer, Demosthenes, &c., became universally studied in the schools. Debating clubs, such as exist at Oxford and Cambridge, were established at the universities for the discussion of controversial points. Medals, inscriptions, statues, antiques of every description, were eagerly sought for. The foundation was thus laid for valuable museums and rare collections, private as well as public. Great progress in mathematics and astronomy was followed by the introduction of algebra and of the mariner's compass.

A point which cannot fail to strike the observant reader is the protection which the princes of Italy accorded to men of letters. Popes, emperors, kings, and princes eagerly sought the society of, and awarded the place of honour to, men of genius, whose friendship they courted. The sovereign power of intellect was acknowledged, and the hereditary nobility of rank held out a fraternal hand to the self-created nobility of talent. Amongst the princes of the fourteenth century who distinguished themselves as patrons of literature, Robert, King of Naples, holds a prominent place. His court (from 1309 to 1343) was not only one of

* Constantinople taken by the Turks, 1453.

† Doubles the Cape of Good Hope, 1491.

‡ Mathias Corvinus, King of Hungary, from his accession in 1458 to his death in 1490, availed himself of the dispersion of libraries at Constantinople to purchase Greek manuscripts, and employed four transcribers at Florence, besides thirty at Buda, to enrich his collection. According to Panzar, the number of books printed in Italy from 1471 to 1480 was 1297.

* The manuscript is preserved in the library at Florence.

the most brilliant, but one of the most learned, of the age; he was the Mæcenas of the fourteenth century. Two of the noblest patrons of literature that Italy ever possessed were Pope Nicholas the Fifth and Pope Leo the Tenth. The post of apostolic secretary, looked upon as the highest honour, was repeatedly conferred upon men of letters.

The Roman University had fallen into decay. The primary cause of this was the long sojourn of the popes at Avignon. Innocent the Seventh conceived the idea of re-establishing it. In the midst of the turmoils of the great schism, Innocent issued a bull, in which, after stating that in consequence of the unsettled times the schools of learning at Rome had become neglected, he announced that he had appointed learned professors in all the branches of the sciences and in the Greek tongue. His praiseworthy endeavours did not, however, succeed in re-establishing it on a permanent footing. The merit for achieving so desirable an end was reserved to Pope Eugenius the Fourth; but the university especially flourished under Nicholas the Fifth.

The University of Bologna had gradually fallen off in the middle of the fourteenth century, but, towards the close of the century, was resuming its pristine high reputation. At the commencement of the fifteenth century it was in high repute, numbering among its professors some of the most learned scholars in Italy, as Guarino, Filelfo, and Aurispa. Filelfo relates that when he went there to assume his duties as professor, in 1428, such a large number of professors came to welcome him that nothing more honourable can be imagined. The Cardinal of Arles, the legate at Bologna, sent for him immediately on his arrival, and received him with every mark of distinction. He was allowed a salary of four hundred and fifty scudi, namely, three hundred from the city, and one hundred and fifty from the private purse of the legate, who, moreover, presented him with a purse of fifty scudi and other valuable presents. In the same year a revolutionary movement took place at Bologna, and for the three following years the university was deserted. In 1450, the university was rebuilt by Cardinal Bessarione. He offered high salaries to the most learned professors, and aroused the emulation for study among the youth of Bologna by prizes and rewards. Nicholas the Fifth conferred various privileges upon the university. Students from all parts of Europe flocked to Bologna. Christian, King of Denmark, visited it in 1474. Desirous that two of his courtiers should receive diplomas—one of law, the other of medicine—the ceremony took place in the church of San Pietro. Elevated seats having been prepared for the professors who had to confer the diplomas, a more elevated seat was raised for the king, who, out of respect for the university, declined taking possession of it, declaring that he should deem it the highest honour to be seated side by side with men whom all the world held in such high esteem.

Whilst under the rule of the lords of Carrara, the University of Padua was in a flourishing condition. Having fallen to Venice, in 1406, the Venetians voted the sum of four thousand ducats for the benefit of the university—a sum which was annually voted in subsequent years. A papal bull, issued by Pope Eugenius the Fourth, in 1439, conferred various privileges upon the university. The Venetian senate, in its desire to render the university as flourishing as possible, prohibited the establishment of public schools in other cities of the republic—an impolitic and arbitrary act, which led to the emigration of many of her sons. Venice, the capital, was an exception to the act. The University of Venice was in such high repute that it did not fear a rival. The senate decreed, however, that the degrees of philosophy and medicine only should be conferred at Venice, whilst Padua had the exclusive right of conferring those of divinity and law.

At the commencement of the fifteenth century, the University of Pisa had greatly fallen off. The city was annexed to the Florentine republic in 1406. The university had nearly been swamped by that of Florence. The Florentines, aware of the advantages which Pisa offered as a place of study, and well understanding that two universities could not co-exist so near each other in the same state, turned all their attention to Pisa. The University of Florence had gone through many changes; at one time well attended, at another deserted, supported or neglected by turns by the authorities. Guarino and Aurispa gave lectures there in 1428. Filelfo went there from Bologna, and his lectures seem to have been well attended. Under Lorenzo di Medici the University of Florence reached the height of its prosperity. In 1472, a decree of the senate transferred the University of Florence to Pisa. A papal brief of Pope Sixtus the Fourth, issued in 1475, empowered the Florentines to levy a tax of five thousand ducats for five years upon the church property for the benefit of the new university. In 1479, in consequence of the devastations of the plague, the university was transferred to Pistoja, but only for one year. The plague having again made its appearance at Pisa in 1481, the classes migrated to Prato, but after three months the lectures were resumed at Pisa. In 1485, from a similar cause, the classes were again opened for a time at Prato.

Florence and Pisa were not the only cities of Tuscany that boasted universities. The University of Siena stood in high repute in the fifteenth century. Filelfo, who appears to have been ubiquitous, held a course of lectures there when compelled to leave Florence in 1435. For two years he received the annual salary of two hundred and fifty florins.

The University of Arezzo had fallen into decay; and when the city was annexed to Florence, the students all left for Pisa.

The University of Pavia stood in good repute in the fifteenth century, both as regards the eminence of the professors and number of

students. In the chronicles of Piacenza, mention is made of a Cardinal Branda Castiglione, a Milanese, and bishop of that city, who at the commencement of the fifteenth century founded a college at Pavia, at which twenty-five young men of Piacenza, selected by the bishop of that city, were to be educated. The university was most frequented by the Milanese. On the death of Philip Maria Visconti in 1447, Pavia having thrown off allegiance to Milan, the youth of Milan were prohibited studying there. The consequence was, that, though embroiled in war, the Milanese established a university of their own. When Sforza was proclaimed Duke of Milan, the University of Pavia was again frequented by the Milanese. The Sforza proved themselves good patrons. Louis, surnamed the Moor, erected a university at Pavia. A poet of that day, Lancino Corte, has recorded in doggerel Latin verse the fame of this university. Duke Louis did not, however, neglect the schools of Milan. In addition to the professorship of Greek and elocution, he established professorships of history and of music. Two noble Milanese, Tommaso Grassi and Tommaso Piatti, bequeathed large sums to the schools of their native city (1470).

Universities also existed at Piacenza, Novara, and Ferrara. The latter was opened with great solemnity by the Marquis Albert of Este, in 1391. At a later period, Guarino and Aurispa gave lectures there.

The University of Naples flourished in the fifteenth century.

The University of Turin was founded in the year 1405, by Louis, Prince of Savoy. He was an adherent of the Anti-Pope Benedict the Thirteenth, who issued a bull conferring various privileges upon the new university. These privileges were confirmed by the Emperor Sigismund in 1412, and also by Pope John the Twenty-third. Amadeus the Eighth, first Duke of Savoy, who succeeded Prince Louis, added new privileges to it in 1424. The plague having committed great ravages at Turin, the university was transferred to Chiesi, from whence again, in consequence of the pestilence, it was removed to Savigliano, from which town, in 1437, it was transferred back to Turin. Additional privileges were granted by Louis, the son of Amadeus, and by Pope Eugenius the Fourth. For a short period the classes were transferred to Moncalieri, but back again to Turin in 1459.

The University of Parma was also founded in the fifteenth century (1412). It owes its origin to Nicholas the Third, Marquis of Ferrara, to whom the city belonged.

As already observed, it was Pope Eugenius the Fourth who carried out the plan of Innocent the Seventh with regard to the University of Rome; but the protection afforded by those popes to education and literature sinks into comparative insignificance by the side of the noble patronage of Pope Nicholas the Fifth, who, in the eight years of his pontificate, did more for literature in Italy than all his predecessors.

It is a golden page we read in the history of

Italy, when we find that, even in the midst of dire feuds and civil war, a neutral ground was allowed for science, literature, and the fine arts. The lords of Montferrat, the Dukes of Urbino, the lords of Rimini, the Gonzaga, the Este, vied with royal houses in furthering education and in their patronage to literature. The Marquis of Mantua ordered a seminary to be built for the education of his children, to which other children were admitted. It was a noble mansion, with halls and galleries; on the walls were depicted the joyous sports of children, whence it acquired the name of "Casa gioiosa." This academy, for it soon rose to such, became frequented by young men from France, from Germany, and from Greece, and achieved a celebrity not inferior to that of the first universities.

The Medici, with whose name that of Nicholas the Fifth is intimately connected, did good service in the establishment of libraries and academies. When only a young clerical student, Tomaso di Sarzana (afterwards Pope Nicholas the Fifth) was engaged by Cosmo di Medici to assist him in arranging the library of San Marco, the foundation of the celebrated library in Florence, known as the "Biblioteca Marciana." It was Nicholas the Fifth who laid the foundation of the Vatican library. Clement the Fifth, when he transferred the papal see to Avignon, carried along with him the manuscripts which then formed the pontifical library. There they remained till the year 1417, when Martin the Fifth took them back to Rome. Under the pontificate of Eugenius the Fourth, the library was very scanty. Ambrogio Camolde, who visited Rome in 1432, published an account of the libraries of the Holy City. Amongst others, he mentions that of Cardinal Orsini, a great portion of which had been sent to Perugia, where the cardinal had been appointed legate; another, especially attached to the Church of St. Cecilia, especially mentioning a codex of twenty-nine homilies; another library, which he styles "Biblioteca del Papa," distinguishing it from the "Biblioteca di San Pietro," the latter being probably the property of that church. He says that he found few manuscripts of value in either. Nicholas the Fifth undertook the task of collecting a library on a large scale in Rome. He sent emissaries to all parts to collect Latin and Greek manuscripts without regard to expense. He engaged the most eminent men to copy them, and paid them handsomely. In this manner he collected five thousand volumes. Death prevented him carrying out his design of throwing open a public library for the use of the Romans. Pope Calixtus the Third, who succeeded Nicholas the Fifth, spent forty thousand scudi in adding manuscripts to the collection commenced by Nicholas. It was not till the pontificate of Sixtus the Fourth that the Vatican library was thrown open to the public.

When exiled from Florence, Cosmo di Medici founded a library in the monastery of St. George, which he left as a donation to Venice, as a mark of his gratitude for the hospitality he

received when he sought refuge there. On his reinstatement to power, Cosmo founded the celebrated Laurentian library at Florence, called after his son Lorenzo, who greatly enriched it. Another Florentine of large fortune, Niccolò Niccoli, devoted his wealth to a similar purpose. He collected a library of eight hundred volumes in the Greek, Latin, and Oriental languages; but his liberality exceeded his means. He died poor in 1436. Cosmo was appointed one of sixteen trustees, and he undertook to pay all Niccolò's debts, if allowed sole disposal of the library. This was agreed to, and the books were placed for public use in the Biblioteca Marciana. A building was erected by Cosmo, divided into separate compartments or chambers devoted respectively to manuscripts in different languages.

The Academy of Platonic Philosophy, founded by Cosmo, is the first institution that assumed the name of "Academy" in Italy. The academicians were divided into three categories—the patrons [*mecenati*], the hearers [*ascoltori*], and the novices or disciples, consisting of young aspirants to philosophy. Their great festival was held on the thirteenth of November, the anniversary of the birth and death of Plato. The superintendence of the academy was entrusted to Marsilio Ficino, the son of Cosmo's private physician.

"In a villa overhanging the towers of Florence, on the steep slope of that lofty hill crowned by the mother city, the ancient Fiesole, in gardens which Tully might have envied, with Ficino, Landino, and Politian by his side, Lorenzo* delighted his hours of leisure with the beautiful visions of Platonic philosophy, for which the summer stillness of an Italian sky appears the most congenial accompaniment. Never could the sympathies of the soul with outer nature be more finely touched; never could more striking suggestions be presented to the philosopher and the statesman. Florence lay beneath them; not with all the magnificence which the later Medici have given her, but, thanks to the piety of former times, presenting almost as varied an outline to the sky. One man, the wonder of Cosmo's age, Brunelleschi, had crowned the beautiful city with the vast dome of its cathedral—a structure unthought of in Italy before, and rarely since surpassed. It seemed, amidst clustering towers of inferior churches, an emblem of the Catholic hierarchy under its supreme head; like Rome itself, imposing, unbroken, unchangeable, radiating to every part of the earth, and directing its convergent curves to heaven. Round this were numbered, at unequal heights, the Baptistery, with its gates, as Michael Angelo called them, worthy of paradise; the tall and richly decorated belfry of Giotto; the church of the Carmine with the fresco of Masaccio; those of Santa Maria Novella (in the language of the same great man), as beautiful as a bride; of Santa Croce, second only to the Cathedral of St. Mark;

and of San Spirito, another great monument of the genius of Brunelleschi—the numerous convents that rose within the walls of Florence, or were scattered immediately about them. From these the eye might turn to the trophies of a republican government that was rapidly giving way before the citizen prince who now surveyed them; the Palazzo Vecchio, in which the Signory of Florence held their councils, raised by the Guelph aristocracy, the exclusive but not tyrannous faction that long swayed the city; or the new and unfinished palace which Brunelleschi had designed for one of the Pitti family before they fell, as others had already done in the fruitless struggle against the house of Medici; itself destined to become the abode of the victorious race, and to perpetuate, by retaining its name, the revolutions that had raised them to power. The prospect, from an elevation of a great city, is one of the most impressive as well as beautiful we ever beheld. Mountains, bright with various hues and clothed with wood, bounded the horizon, and on most sides, at no great distance, but embosomed in these, were other villas and domains. Herds of buffaloes pastured in the valley down which the yellow Arno steals silently through the long reaches to the sea."*

Ficino held a course of public lectures on Platonic philosophy, which were attended by the most celebrated men of the day.

Under Leo X. (son of Lorenzo di Medici), the University of Rome rose to pre-eminence. The most learned professors were induced by liberal offers to hold lectures; young Greeks of promising talent were invited to Rome with a view to spread among the Roman youth a better knowledge of, and love for, Greek classics. The new Pope appointed as his secretaries Pietro Bembo and Jacopo Sadoleto, the two most elegant Latin writers of the day. The Vatican library was entrusted to Beroaldo. There was not a man of note, poet, artist, or orator who did not turn his looks or wend his steps towards the holy city, and every man of merit met with a hospitable welcome from the magnanimous pontiff. The published letters of Leo X., chiefly with Bembo and Erasmus, are so many patent proofs of his exertions for the promotion of literature. Aided by the genius of Michael Angelo and of Raphael, the magnificent Basilica of the Vatican rose at his command.

Amongst the academies of Italy, the Academia della Crusca, or Academy of the Sieve, implying that the good grain alone was taken, held a prominent position. A violent attack upon Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, in the magazine issued by the academy in 1578, supposed to have been written by Salviati, gave great offence to the poet. This academy counted amongst its members some of the most learned men of Italy.

In 1587, the University of Genoa was in high repute. It offered Tasso a salary of four hundred gold crowns for a course of lectures on ethics and Aristotle.

* At Cosmo's death, Lorenzo di Medici became the patron of the academy.

* Hallam.

Of the ecclesiastical colleges and existing monasteries at Rome at the present day we do not speak. Florence has become the capital of Italy, and within her classical precincts a great portion of the youth of Italy will meet to pursue their studies, without detriment to the universities and academies of the other great cities of Italy.

GOLD WORKS WONDERS.

RICHARD of spendthrifts was the chief,

There ne'er was such another;

A barrister without a brief,

No money, and no bother.

'Twas hard that he, so gay and free,

Should have an elder brother.

He paid no tailor for his coat,

His duty was to wear one.

He often lacked a five-pound note,

But ne'er a friend to share one.

In bliss, his voice exclaimed "Rejoice,"

In sorrow, "Grin and bear it."

His purse was empty,—yet he spent

As though his path were sunny;

Borrowed at twenty-five per cent,

And gave away the money.

(A fellow-drone could always own

A little of the honey.)

Luck turned at last, the brother died,

For Death will not spare any,

And Dick—the lord of acres wide,

I dare not say how many,

Inherited, the gossips said,

A very pretty penny.

His friends are now left in the lurch,

His manner's dry and chilling,

He'll give a hundred to a church,

A neighbour not a shilling;

But, as they go, he'll mumble low,

"Unable, not unwilling."

Write him a tale of woe, his eye

Turns upward in the socket;

And then he lays your letter by,

With date and careful docket.

Call, and I doubt you'll find him out

Of temper, town, or pocket.

Can gold work wonders? Yes it can:

The cruel exciser

Has changed an honest thriftless man

Into a grasping miser;

Less foolish, true, than him we knew,

But not a whit the wiser.

THE HISTORY OF A SACK OF CORN.

FIRST CHAPTER.

VASSILI IVANOVITCH DOOYUMALSKY is a prince and a pedlar. It is not a forced expression to call him a pedlar. He is a general dabbler in other men's business; a marauder on the border-lands of lawful trade, pocketing its profits and shirking its responsibilities. He will and can sell anything. I put the word "will" first because there is no sort of doubt about his willingness; but many men who would cheerfully sell anything whatever, from their words to their wardrobes, have frequently some difficulty in settling for the purchase

money. The difference between Vassili Ivanovitch and other men is that he has no difficulty at all, and that he is not only ready but able to find a market always open for his wares. They are a queer assortment, if plainly catalogued. A droschky, a fur pelisse, some furniture in several cities, a few stray houses, a dozen forks and spoons, a principality in Wallachia, a silver teapot, a railway concession, any number of grand crosses, stars, and ribands, a miscellaneous stock of titles of nobility, a villa in the Crimea, a trotting horse, a palace just built (except the staircase and windows) and splendidly furnished, a pianoforte by Erard, a Cremona fiddle, a steam plough, a thrashing-machine, a cigar-case, half a dozen standing crops of wheat, over fifty thousand acres, each crop more or less, a circular saw, a pardon for forging bank-notes or for arson, commissariat contracts, a monopoly for the sale of brandy among a population warranted always tipsy, leave of absence from the army, places, commissions, and promotions, signal vengeance on one's enemy, judicial sentences, reversals of the same or other sentences, decisions on appeal cases, and all other things that may be bought in Russia.

Being of no country in particular, excepting that he trades only partly in Russia and partly in the Moldo-Wallachian provinces of the Lower Danube, where divorces are the rule rather than the exception, he will even woo a wife for somebody else, arrange all details of property or settlements, and marry her himself for a consideration, if the article is found unsuitable after the preliminaries are concluded. His terms are moderate, and he executes all orders with promptitude and attention, if not paid in advance, when it has been observed that he is liable to some defects of memory.

But his especial glory is hunting up lawsuits, and managing them. As there are no solicitors in Russia, and as the code (in this respect not altogether unlike a code nearer home) is in such a wonderful state of confusion that sound legal pretext may be found either for doing or for not doing whatever sharp folks have a mind to accomplish, this law-hunting is a very profitable business. The law-hunter is agent, solicitor, counsel, and often judge, all rolled into one; which is convenient, and prevents mistake or unnecessary division of profits. The trade is so lucrative, that large estates are sometimes got out of a single suit. It thus happens that the princely Dooyoumalsky has recently become possessed of a fine property, situated most conveniently, partly on the Bessarabian frontier, and partly on the Moldavian, or partly in Russia and partly out of it. He has selected it out of three estates which he has just gained to the amazement of the last plaintiff, and to the utter bewilderment and consternation of the last defendant, who have had dealings with him. He has chosen this estate because a ripe experience has convinced him that almost anything may be done, or not done, with land so favourably situated; and the beautiful intricacy of the law becomes still more complicated when it has to

deal with a domain under two different governments, jealous and at war with each other, while envious neighbouring states are sulkily looking on. He has found his account before under such circumstances, and he knows very well that he will be practically his own monarch, lord chancellor, and council, in this favoured locality. He has come to the large corn exporting port of NICOLAIEV, to meet a railway contractor, to sell him the right of way through his newly acquired property, and to persuade him incidentally into buying the next year's wheat crop—on his recently acquired land—which last he looks upon as a minor consideration.

It must be observed that no one thinks of sticking to one trade in Russia, and the contractor is as ready to buy wheat as he would be to buy twenty thousand tea-kettles or a French local newspaper. He and the prince perfectly understand each other, and have had a running account for many years. Nevertheless, the nobleman has got the best of it. He has bamboozled that contractor. He has got an advance on his next year's crops; he has made a handsome thing of the right of way; and he has sold the estate altogether to a Greek orange-dealer, suddenly enriched at the expense of Lloyd's by fraudulent wrecks and insurances.

All this comes to a pretty round sum, even when the bigwigs at St. Petersburg, whom it will not do to offend, have had their share out of it. So, with both pockets full of money, away goes my prince to dine with the local governor, admiral, or chief personage then and there present. After dinner, at about nine o'clock, he adjourns to meet a fine party assembled elsewhere, especially in his honour.

From one end to the other of Russia my prince is renowned for the charm of his wit, the variety of his information, and the extraordinary vivacity of his conversation. His voice in singing would make the fortune of a tenor. His figure is very remarkable, tall, stalwart, florid, bright-eyed, dark, pleasant, winning. He is one of those rare Russians who is at once humorous and scholarly. He has travelled, thought, acted in many countries, and he is one of the sharpest men of business known among the human race. His profession, indeed, is so good that it naturally absorbs all the best needy men in Russia, as the church did in Western Europe during the middle ages.

From nine in the evening till one in the morning my prince keeps his hearers enthralled. He is delighted with everything, and it is good to see with what harmless nothings he can be amused, and what a singular grace he gives to them. Of course he is king of the company, although it is composed of two serene highnesses, an ex-ambassador, and other notabilities; for indeed he is an important ally; and though it is not advisable to let him know too much of one's affairs lest he should scent out a lawsuit, yet he is a powerful friend in case of need, and can do things to surprise all men. There is probably nothing in Russia that he could not do for an adequate consideration;

and, strange to say, I am not writing of an individual, but of a class; a class small, indeed, but one which numbers some hundreds among its members; a class which has a representative in every phase of Russian society, and in every city, town, and village throughout the empire.

Most people present have something to say to my prince. They watch their opportunity, and as everybody is laughing at some brilliant sally or odd story, they walk him off behind pillars and statuettes towards bow-windows or conservatories, and talk to him earnestly. Most serious business in Russia among gentle and simple is done in this way, cigarette in hand. But everything comes to an end, and after a champagne supper, served at midnight, for it is the custom to dine early, my prince grows restless.

He is to start for his newly won, mortgaged, and sold estate early in the morning, to make arrangements for getting something more out of the purchaser than the mere purchase-money he has already received. He knows that he will find fifty ways of doing this, and that it needs no previous thought at all; so meantime he will just look in for half an hour at the club of nobles. His wife, a fat, inert, extinct princess, utterly sat upon and subdued, knows very well what that means. She tries a feeble remonstrance; and his kind host and hostess feel a genuine sorrow to see him go. His wife is precious as enabling him to claim rights of nationality in Moldavia, of which rich thriftless land she is a native born; but her counsels influence him little. He has a vain-glorious, boyish, and thoroughly Russian pleasure in trying to seem wayward and extravagant in the eyes of his host and hostess; so the gallant Dooyoumsky is off immediately after supper. He hums a tune from Don Giovanni as he pockets his stars and decorations on the staircase, and the next minute his droschky is heard hurrying out of the court-yard.

At dawn, some hours later, a flushed and tipsy gentleman, accompanied by half a dozen smoking-companions, all eagerly talking and gesticulating at the same time, reels into the hotel yard, where a travelling-carriage and a stout muffled-up lady are waiting for him to depart. The whole company kiss each other, cross each other very noisily and fussily, and then away go the post-horses, bursting into a headlong gallop as they speed towards the corn-lands in the interior.

Nothing is said about it—that would be waste of breath, for the thing has happened so often, and will happen so often again—but the fact is, that Dooyoumsky has just lost his new fortune. Between one and eight o'clock on an autumn morning he has gambled away every rouble of the money just received, and a very large sum beside. When he takes his seat near his wife in the travelling-carriage, he is penniless for the twentieth time. This would not signify much, but for the debt of honour he has just incurred at the club. That must be paid anyhow; and the standing crops, on which he expatiated so much to the purchaser of the

estate, will just pay it, if he can get them reaped in time. Then, of course, there must be a wrangle about the conditions of the purchase, and, perhaps, while that is going on, he may be able to sell the land over again. At all events, he has not yet given up possession, and has no intention of completing the transaction for many a day. So my prince goes to sleep very contentedly, and wakes up, after a stage or two, to sing duets with his wife till the end of the journey.

So the crop is re-sold, the debt of honour is paid, and months roll uneventfully away. My prince is at St. Petersburg, or elsewhere, doing a larger business than ever, and merely flashes from time to time, like a comet, upon the benighted country districts. But his wife is still residing, as lady of the land, upon the estate sold to the orange-dealer. That worthy has long ago convinced himself that it would not be prudent to disturb her; and can only shriek his complaints to the winds in lonely places, or whisper them softly to the wall in the strict privacy of his own apartment when the doors are locked. Otherwise he might have to do with the secret police, who are retained by the omnipotent magnate who has cozened him.

The land is all bare, quite bare, as if it had been occupied and plundered by a hostile army. Not an ox, or a sheep, or a chicken throughout the length and breadth of it; nothing but a few lean swine and an old goose or two, who escaped by a miracle when my prince swept everything off to pay the debt of honour. The princess lives chiefly on dried mushroom-soup and maize-pudding; sometimes her chief butler—an indispensable personage in all Russian establishments—forages for a roebuck or a hare. This, with a salted cabbage, when it can be got, is the poor lady's diet; and she is contented, seeing that she has got a stock of the prince's cigars, which were left behind by accident, to comfort her. But time wears on apace, and the land must be sown. Here is a dilemma. There is not a single grain left of last year's crops for seed-corn. The hawk-eyed man who came from Nicolaiev with the carts swept every grain of it into them. Dooyounalski, on urgent appeal, telegraphs to his wife to beg some of a neighbouring prince, who is not a pedlar, but a staid prosperous gentleman, and who was, moreover, an old friend and admirer of the poor lady. Subsequently, lest his telegram should be incomprehensible, as most Russian telegrams are, my prince himself composes a pitiable and romantic tale for her, which he sends, in a registered letter, by post. Here he discusses the arguments most likely to obtain the seed-corn, and draws a touching picture of his own recklessness. His wife copies and sends this letter in her own name to the good neighbour, whose eyes grow dim when he reads it. He at once replies that he will give what is asked of him, and feels his heart grow warmer as his messenger, on the fleetest pony of his herd, passes over the hills at a canter.

So Demetri, the chief butler, is despatched with a long string of carts to bring the seed-

corn. These are borrowed from one of the prince's clients, who happens just then to be under sentence for forging a will, and who knows my prince can get it promptly reversed. So that things generally favour the lady, and all difficulty of transport is overcome this once without need of ready money.

A full week has elapsed since the chief butler ought to have returned; but he does not appear. After a few days more, however, somebody else comes instead. This is a German pedlar. He is a very different person to his princely fellow-tradesman; but he is quite as well known and indispensable an individual; for nothing whatever can be done in Russia without a go-between, and he is that go-between. He and his brethren so swarm over the land, that it is hard to buy a block of firewood or a quire of writing-paper without their interference. Direct dealing of all kinds is unknown, and all business must go through a middleman. Thus, though the small pedlar, whose operations are confined to one locality, is not so fine a fellow as the great pedlar, he has nevertheless a thriving trade of his own, which is quite as profitable in its way, as well as even steadier and quicker in its returns. The small pedlar comes to say that he knows all about the chief butler. That excellent man has fallen ill; and he has been to Yassy. He will arrive in a few days. So says the pedlar, and, as he says it, his demeanour presents a fine study of semi-barbarous manners. He is more abject and self-abased in his humility than is readily conceivable by the British mind. Yet he knows that the tawdry forlorn lady before whom he prostrates himself is absolutely in his power, and is unable to move hand or foot but by his permission. All struggle against him is out of the question; his web is far too wide and too strong to render escape possible. His humility is merely part of his stock-in-trade. It is profitable; there is no dealing with a princess without it; that is the secret of it—nothing more.

By-and-by the chief butler does return. But his aspect is lugubrious. He has a doleful story to relate. He has been insulted, outraged, on his mission. In vain he has protested; he has done all and more than a man can do; but the neighbouring prince's agent has afflicted and beaten him (not the neighbouring prince himself, who is all goodness, but his agent). The chief butler weeps. He requires to be comforted with hot tea and kind words before he can explain that, in consequence of the insults heaped upon him, he has but a poor account to give of the seed-corn. He has been all the way to Yassy, to offer an image to the church of his patron saint there, in order that his journey might be prosperous (here the chief butler crosses himself); yet Fortune has not gone with him. His language is very picturesque and beautiful as he relates these mishaps, and he flatters his mistress now and then with infinite address. As for the seed-corn, there is some, such as it is, but not much; and that is spoiled. Most of the oxen sent with the carts died on the way to

Yassy; many of the carts are missing too. "Woe is me!" says the chief butler, and beats his breast. He is a sly, podgy man; but his decorous robe and his grave beard entirely preserve him from looking comic. It is remarked that for some days after this, whenever he is wanted, he is found chuckling in corners and in spirit cellars with the pedlar, and that he is constantly drunk; but he takes sedulous care never to recover his cheerfulness in the presence of his mistress till the transaction about the corn is beginning to fade from her memory.

His story, unaccountable as it is, inadequately represents the true state of the case. Except a few damp, mouldy, shrunken bags made of matting in one of the carts, he has brought back no visible seed-corn at all. At this crisis, however, the pedlar, who has suddenly become a warm friend and adviser of the perplexed household, is ready with a remedy. He knows a Greek mercantile house who will supply seed-corn under an arrangement that he will undertake to make, if his travelling expenses are paid to Nicolaiev, and if a small commission is added for his trouble.

The chief butler, who possesses the prince's authority to sign agreements in his name, must go too; and they will start at once. "But there is no money," says the princess, ruefully. "How am I to pay your commission?" "Ah!" says the chief butler, "the saints will give that." Let the princess only be happy, and this jewel of a chief butler will persuade this pearl of a pedlar to induce the benevolent Greek mercantile firm to take an order on next year's corn, and pay any money that may be presently required. The pedlar crosses his hands over his breast, and then bows very low, hat in hand. He also takes occasion to edge in a little request of his own. He has got a friend, a poor, honest man, who has been taken up by mistake, for passing forged bank-notes. He is a very poor man with a large family; and therefore the pedlar hopes that the princess will write to her august husband and get him a pardon. She will, and does it.

All this being duly promised and settled, the pedlar disappears for some days, and then, in a string of carts that reaches from the lady's lodgings to the furthest barn, comes the seed-corn at last. There is enough to sow some sixty thousand acres, packed in strong shower-proof sacks full to bursting. Here is corn, indeed, and the pedlar, who heads the procession, staff in hand, once more bares his head and bows himself to the earth, as a good man who has done unexpected service more than well: as the servant may have bent himself before Abraham when he had returned from the city of Nahor.

What strikes my princess as rather curious, however, is that these lusty corn-sacks are all marked with the well-remembered cypher and coronet of her old admirer. One sleepy Wal-lack, too, who seems to be in charge of the carts, goes down on his knees in the mud and takes a letter out of the breast of his sheepskin; but he

is hustled away with blows by the pedlar for presuming to address the illustrious lady, so she can make nothing of it. Years afterwards—for intercourse among distant friends is rare in Russia—she will learn that the first corn got from her old friend was sold by the chief butler and the pedlar at Yassy. The second supply was obtained by a specious story that her husband was dead; and the journey to Nicolaiev, the benevolent mercantile firm, and all the rest of the narratives related to her, represent an ingenious fiction which her husband will be the first to laugh at when he hears of it. However, here is the seed-corn now, and although the season is very far advanced, it may still be sown with some chance of its coming up. Perhaps a fifth or a tenth of it really is sown; perhaps a little more, perhaps a little less, no great difference either way. In any case, there will be enough to meet the assignments made in the prince's name to the pedlar's correspondent at Nicolaiev, for he himself transferred them before the ink on the signatures was dry. So the first scene of this comedy closes, with a few peasants, men and women, hired at wages of about two shillings a day each, straggling away over the fields to sow the wheat. The pedlar, who farms their labour, follows them with a barrel of vodka, to coax out of them whatever they may have earned or stolen from any one else. But it is to be especially noted that he does not dispense the vodka himself, he merely looks on while another man does it. The pedlar, indeed, never does anything himself. He is merely present at the business. So many a dishonest hatful of the seed-corn returns to the vodka waggon, and is sold and resold a dozen times before it is used in any other way.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

MUTINIES IN THE NAVY.

THE year after Lord Bridport's victory over the French, great and just discontent prevailed among the sailors of our fleet. Lord Chatham seems to have been a blundering First Lord, and his successor, Lord Spencer, a mischievous one.

As early as 1794, the seamen had had many grievous causes of complaint. They were treated rather as oxen penned up for the butcher than as human beings, with hearts to feel, and brains to resent, injustice. That terrible old Tartar, Lord St. Vincent, had once kept our fleet at sea, blockading Brest, for one hundred and three days. Long after this, Nelson watched off Toulon for thirty months, only going on shore, in that period, three times—an hour each time. These tedious blockades, so ruinous to ships and so exhausting to sailors, who, perhaps, half the time, had scanty provisions and insufficient sleep, were strongly disapproved of by Lord Howe, and afterwards by Lord Nelson.

Another cause of complaint in the navy was the capricious and purposeless transfer of crews from one vessel to another. Lord Nelson, at a later date, protested strongly against

this heartless and irrational practice, which kept captains and their men always strangers, and prevented the seamen getting attached to a special ship in that filial, and almost superstitious way, so truthfully shown by our best naval novelist, Marryat, whose books were written in the very midst of the life he described.

A third great grievance was that many of the older vessels were not thoroughly seaworthy. Sailors are wild, reckless fellows; but they will not put out to sea in coffins. Lord Melville afterwards confessed that when he came to the helm, he found a fleet of worn-out ships, that required doubling, cross-bracing, and patching up to prepare them for the rough pummelling at Trafalgar. It was also found necessary to reinforce our crippled squadrons by "donkey frigates," and by those attenuated cheap seventy-fours that the sailors called the "Forty Thieves." It was partly to the weakness and incapability of an enemy that disregarded its navy, that we were indebted for our victories at sea.

Another intolerable grievance among sailors was the cruel and despotic system of impressment. Merchant seamen coming home sick and weary from long cruises on the coast of Africa and dangerous coasting voyages in the West Indies, were seized in the Channel, at the Nore, or at St. Helen's, dragged into tenders, and hurried off, without seeing home or friends, for five or six years more of compulsory misery and privation. Slavery itself could not boast a more iniquitous form of tyranny and oppression. The ringleaders of mutineers, it was observed, had generally been impressed men.

As for the cruel yet almost ludicrous injustice in the distribution of naval prize money we need say little, as the complaint still continues both in the army and the navy, and it frequently happens that the War Office and the Admiralty delay such days of settlement until death lessens the number of recipients.

Sailors are not reflective men, but even they could see through the hard-heartedness, injustice, and stupidity of the Board of Admiralty. In 1783, just after Lord Howe took the place of Keppell as First Lord, a mutiny broke out in the ships at Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Sheerness. The crews had been told that they were to be sent to the West Indies—even the crews of the vessels just returned from those detested and dangerous ports. The *Janus* (44) headed the outbreak, the men keeping their officers under hatches, and refusing to let the captain, who had gone on shore, return on board. The captain at last, finding an opportunity to return, harangued the men, and confessed that the ship was to be kept in commission, and was destined for the American station. The men grew stark mad at this; would hear no more, and rushed down to their quarters with lighted matches, prepared to fire on any boats that approached them. The port admiral instantly wrote to Lord Howe, who came down at once from London boldly and alone. The side of the *Janus* was manned by the mutineers, and the side ropes put over with all

honours and with the greatest respect. Lord Howe then desired all hands to be called, and harangued them reproachfully on the quarter-deck. He assured them he was always ready to listen to any complaints, and he promised them that the *Janus* should be at once paid off, contrary to the intention of his predecessor. The men gave three cheers. The "sailors' friend" had crushed the mutiny by an act of kindness, kindly done.

A few months after this, a mutiny also broke out in the *Raisonnable* (Captain Lord Harvey), just returned from the Leeward Islands. The ship was ordered to Chatham, to be paid off. The men, tired of work, declared they would not go round, but would have their money at once in Portsmouth harbour. They had already begun to unmoor the ship, when Lord Harvey ordered twelve of the ringleaders to be seized and put into irons. The mutiny then ceased. At the court-martial, seven sailors were sentenced to death, three were sentenced to three hundred lashes, and two were acquitted. Three only, however, eventually suffered, and, at Lord Harvey's intercession, the punishment of the rest was remitted.

Lord Howe at this time was very discontented with the state of our navy. He found his flag-ship, the *Victory*, "filthy," and the discipline so bad, that he confessed he did not think it safe for a man to trust himself with such a fleet. In 1794, there was a very serious outbreak on board the *Culloden*. The men were afraid of the vessel, and wanted it docked and examined. A letter, stating their grievances, and signed "A Delegate," was written to Lord Bridport, then second in command. Captain Trowbridge, however, applied for a court-martial on ten of the ringleaders, of whom two were acquitted, and eight sentenced to be hanged.

But it was in the year 1797—a year memorable for the gallant actions of Sir John Jervis off Cape St. Vincent, and Admiral Duncan off the *Texel*, that the worst mutinies broke out. Seventy-nine naval courts-martial are recorded in that year alone.

As early as March, 1797, petitions were sent to Lord Howe, then at Bath for the benefit of the waters, begging him to solicit the Admiralty to raise the sailors' pay, as had been lately done to the army and militia, and also to make some provision for their wives and families. Lord Howe, Lord Bridport, and Sir Peter Parker, the port admiral, thinking all these petitions to be the work of merely one factious person, cast them into the official waste-paper basket. In April, however, it was discovered that the various crews were in correspondence, and there was a plan to seize the vessels and turn out the officers. On the 15th of April, Admiral Bridport, being telegraphed from the Admiralty, signalled the fleet to prepare for sea. Instead of weighing anchor, the men of the *Queen Charlotte* instantly mounted the rigging, and gave three cheers. These cheers were answered from every ship. The next day, two delegates were chosen by each ship, and Lord Howe's cabin appointed for their conferences. On the 17th, every sea-

man in the fleet, even including the admiral's body-servants, was sworn to support the cause. They reeved ropes from the yard-arms, as a warning and terror to all traitors, and they sent on shore all objectionable officers. Military honours were paid to the delegates. Corporal punishment was inflicted on drunkards, and more than usually strict discipline preserved. Frigates with convoys were allowed to sail.

The Board of Admiralty came down to Portsmouth on the 17th, and finding the sailors' demands reasonable, agreed to advance their pay, four shillings a month to the able, three shillings to the ordinary, and two shillings to landsmen. The men refused to give an immediate consent, which so exasperated Admiral Gardner, a choleric man, that he shook one delegate by the collar, and swore he would have every fifth man in the fleet hanged. This so madened the mutineers, that it was with difficulty the admiral escaped from the ship with his life. Lord Bridport's flag was then struck, in spite of the entreaties of many of the officers, a red flag hoisted, every gun in the fleet loaded, and matches kept ready lighted. On the 23rd, Lord Bridport, whom the sailors called "their father and friend," returned to his ship, and rehoisted his flag; but the mutineers still refused to lift an anchor till the king had granted them a pardon under his sign manual; also

Until the rise in their pay was sanctioned by act of parliament;

Until the supply of vegetables was increased;

Until the grievances of private ships were redressed.

The mutineers also demanded more leave on shore, more attention to the sick on board ship, and that pay should be continued to men wounded in action, until they were either cured or discharged. They moreover demanded that the marines' pay should be increased, that the pensions at Greenwich Hospital should be raised to ten pounds per annum, also that the daily bread and meat should be augmented to sixteen ounces; and they expressed a wish that the East India Company's fleet should share in these reforms.

On these demands being acceded to, and the king's pardon being given, the fleet returned to its duty, and some of the vessels sailed at once for St. Helen's. An unwise delay in passing the act of parliament, and an injudicious order from the Admiralty to captains to keep the marines' arms in good order, and to repress disturbances, alarmed the naturally suspicious sailors, and on the 7th of May fresh mutinies broke out at St. Helen's and at Spithead, and delegates were again appointed. Admiral Colpoys refusing to allow the delegates on board the London, and ordering his men below, one man began to unleash a foremost gun, threatening to point it aft and sweep the quarter-deck. A lieutenant, having warned this man, on his persistence, fired and shot him dead. The dead man's comrades, joined by the marines, instantly rushed to arms, disarmed the officers, proposed to hang the lieutenant, and even to kill the admiral. But, by the generous courage of the admiral, who

took the blame entirely upon himself, and by the fervent intercession of the chaplain and the surgeon, the offender's life was spared.

It was a curious trait of sailors' character, in the midst of all this violence, that the men threatened to throw over-board a mutineer, for calling the admiral "a bloody rascal."

One of the ships' companies talking openly of carrying their vessel into a French harbour, the delegates threatened them with instant destruction if the language was repeated; and, believing that they were infected by revolutionary agents from the shore, kept guard, boats rowing round the treasonable vessel night and day.

The objectionable officers being again sent on land, Lord Howe, though old, infirm, and gouty, was requested by the king to visit the fleet, and try conciliatory measures. On the 11th of May, the brave old sailor visited the line of battle ships, and received the delegates on board the Royal William. He insisted, however, that, before a pardon by royal proclamation was issued, they should express contrition. This they did, but declared they would never receive again the officers sent ashore. Lord Howe consented to this, much to the disgust of all martinets. By this agreement, one admiral, four captains, twenty-nine lieutenants, and twenty-five midshipmen were superseded.

But the fleet at the Nore remained still mutinous and dissatisfied. The seamen of the Sandwich even went so far as to fire on the San Fiorenza, which was passing by them on its way to Yarmouth roads to receive the Prince of Württemberg and his bride. Then the Admiralty Board went down to Sheerness, and there was an attempt at a rising on board Lord Duncan's vessel, the Venerable. Towards the end of the month, when the admiral ordered the fleet to weigh and proceed from Yarmouth to the Texel, two of the squadron refused, on pretence of being in course of payment; and the next day the whole North Sea fleet deserted, and joined Parker and other mutineers at the Nore. A few ships, however, at Portsmouth, refused to help Parker, and expressed themselves satisfied with the concessions already made. On the 6th of June, the Serapis made her escape from the rebels, but was fired at and damaged by the mutineers' shot; and the Clyde was also injured on the 7th of June. On the 15th of June, the mutineers quarrelled, and several vessels left the fleet. The departure of the Nassau was, however, prevented, and the Repulse, running aground, was fired into, and several men killed. Parker himself, not satisfied with nine-pound shot, fired a crowbar from one of the guns. The Ardent, passing in the dark, fired at the Monmouth, and killed and wounded several of her crew.

Soon after this the mutineers broke up in despair. The red flags were struck, and traders allowed to pass up the Thames. That same night, many of the vessels sailed in under the guns of Sheerness, with a flag of truce flying, and Parker, in the Sandwich, soon after sur-

rendered, and the ship was placed between the guns of the fort and the *Ardent*. The admiral's coxswain and a picket of the West York Militia then arrested Parker, and brought him on shore, with his hands bound, to a dark cell under the garrison chapel. The next day he was sent to Maidstone jail. He appeared calm, collected, and rather cheerful. Parker and his confederates were tried on the 22nd of June. He and twenty-two of his companions were sentenced to be hanged on board the *Sandwich*.

In 1801, the mutiny of the *Temeraire* and several other vessels of the Bantry Bay squadron, excited great alarm in the ministry. The discontent came to a head on the 6th of December, 1801, when a report ran through the fleet that some of the vessels were to be sent to the West Indies. The mutineers' plan was to break open the gunner's store and get possession of the tomahawks. When the admiral came on board, and orders were given to un-moor the ship, the disaffected were to rush aft, barricade the hatchways with the hammocks, disarm the sentinels, and seize the arms. The ringleaders had told them that all the marines were gained over except a few "gulpins"—new recruits. The mutineers had secretly loaded several of the guns to fire on the officers, and kept matches lighted for the purpose. They had also rockets with which to signal the other ships. One of them openly boasted that the officers could not kill more than fifty or sixty of the foremost men before they were themselves overpowered, and the powder magazine taken possession of.

The subsequent trial proved that the conspiracy had been long projecting. The ringleaders met in the cabin of a sailor named Mayfield, where they put down their plans in writing. Their confederates sat down with affected carelessness outside the berths, keeping watch, and if the lieutenant, or any suspected officer, came by, the signal of alarm was to sing out, "A rat, catch the rat!" or to throw the hats down on the deck, and ask for a chew of tobacco. The ringleaders, hearing this, would come out and sit down on the cables.

The open mutiny broke out on the 6th of December, about "two bells after dinner." The word was passed round for no mutineer to drink more than his allowance. The cry was then raised for all hands to go forward, and a ringleader instantly shouted, "Lower the ports!" The ports were then lowered, and there was a shout raised of—

"Wad and shot; no place but England."

The men then cheered, and hauled in all the scuttles. One of the delegates of the rioters, a man named Fitzgerald, when he heard the cheering, said exultingly:

"Now the sun shines on us all at last."

Lieutenant Douglas instantly came to ask what the cheering meant, and invited those who had complaints to come on the quarter-deck and address the admiral; but the men, not wishing to single themselves out in that way for future punishment, cried, "No, no! Send

down the master of the ship; we don't want to shiver on the quarter-deck. Only the master shall come down."

Lieutenant Douglas then coming down the ladder, several of the men tried to unship it, and there were cries of—

"Break his neck and kill him." "Shoot, shoot! Bring the match! Strike the rascal with a shot!"

The "True Britons," as these dangerous men called themselves, had before this agreed to cool the officers' tempers, either with shot used as missiles, or with a discharge of cannon. They then went on the quarter-deck in a turbulent crowd, and said they wished to know where they were going to? They had many of them been eight or nine years in service, and now war was over they wanted to go on shore and see their friends. The admiral replied it was no use to be obstreperous—he must obey orders; and when he called all hands, he hoped they would go with good will. The men, however, still kept shouting:

"No, no! We will not go from the land; we will go to England."

On the Sunday, the mutineers grew louder in their threats. The ringleaders proposed to take a man they suspected, tie him in a bread bag, and throw him overboard; the marines were to be stabbed or smothered in their berths; the officers killed; and, if defeated, the rioters were to blow up the ship. They also reported that the crews of the *Formidable*, *Majestic*, and *Vengeance*, were with them; and the cry was, "We will go through with it." The next day they struck a lieutenant who had been complaining of their "cobbing," without orders, men who got drunk. They then rushed aft to rescue a drunken marine who had been put in irons, and the shout was to "clear those gentlemen quality" off the fore-castle, and either kill them or send them away. The next day all the ringleaders were seized, the admiral himself examining the faces of the men on deck by the light of a lantern he carried round. Sixteen of the mutineers were tried on January 6, 1802, on board the *Gladiator*, in Portsmouth harbour. One of them had volunteered at Toulon and at Convention Hill, and others had fought bravely in several of Earl St. Vincent's battles. The court found fifteen of the men guilty, and sentenced one man to receive two hundred lashes. All of them solemnly disclaimed any intention of committing murder. Only six of the men (Mayfield, Collins, Fitzgerald, Chesterman, Ward, and Hillier) were executed: four on board the *Temeraire*, one died on board the *Majestic*, and the last on board the *Formidable*.

It was this same vessel, *THE OLD TEMERAIRE*, the hero of many battles, that Turner painted, by Stanfield's advice, being towed to her last moorings near Greenwich.

No serious outbreak has taken place in our navy since the mutiny of 1801. Much as such outbreaks are to be regretted, it is quite certain that they have generally been occasioned by abuses and acts of injustice to a brave and patriotic race of men, and it is equally provable

that they have in the end often led to a speedy reform of those abuses and those acts of injustice.

ROUGH DOINGS.

LET us suppose that some person with leisure to think, has during the last few months bestowed a certain amount of watchfulness upon the reports of trials and police examinations in the daily papers, what would be the phenomenon which would strike him most?

He would certainly be struck, first of all, and before taking note of anything else, by the preponderance of what are called "acts of violence" over other misdemeanours. He would have met continually, in the course of his reading, with details of bodily maltreatment inflicted on each other by men and by women. He would have read continually of assaults, blows, kicks, stabs, blood-lettings—not in the medical sense—bruises, stripes. He would have read of heads bound up, and wounds strapped together, of murderous poundings with fists, and savage trappings with iron heels, of human beings hugging their victims as bears do, or tearing at them, tiger-fashion, tooth and nail. He would find that first rude idea of the savage, of ill-using the body of the person against whom he bears ill will, an active idea among all sorts and conditions of men, in this advanced period of our civilisation. Keeping to the crime-records of one day, he would read: 1, that "William Allen, about thirty years of age, was sentenced to two months' hard labour for a violent assault upon William Pickett, 357 H, on Saturday night, in St. George's-in-the-East. The prisoner was drunk and making a noise, and when requested to desist and go home, he made a furious attack upon the constable, striking him several times, and *biting his neck*;" 2, that "William Ryan, a labourer, was charged with violently assaulting three policemen, on Saturday night, while he was drunk;" 3, that "William Davis, a young man, described as a paper-hanger, was charged with the following assault: Caroline Howell, of No. 2, Lancashire-court, Broad-street, said, that on Saturday night she was coming down Oxford-street, having walked on a short distance from a friend, who stopped to speak to a friend of hers, when the prisoner came up to her and said something very wrong. She told the prisoner that if he did not go on somebody would give him something, and he replied 'I will,' and then struck her in the eye, and before she could recover herself, he struck her on the arm, and she fell, and her back was injured. She was all over marks, like that on her arm. Her arm was much discoloured. The second blow the prisoner gave her knocked her down."

Turning from acts of mere drunken violence to those in which such violence is accompanied with robbery from the person, our newspaper reader finds, still in the same number of his journal, that on a certain evening Mr. Alexander Thorne, a collector, who was in the

habit of carrying large sums of money about with him, was passing from Roehampton to Putney Heath (a lonely bit of road, as some of us know), when he noticed that two men were following him. He pulled up under a lamp and waited for them to pass, which they did; but, presently returning, one of them struck him a violent blow on the side of the head with a life-preserver.

The blow cut his ear open. His assailant then struck him again on the right side of the head, which caused the blood to flow freely. The prosecutor tried to defend himself with his umbrella, but it was snatched from his hand, and he was struck to the ground, and again assaulted in a very violent manner. When on the ground the prosecutor managed to roll over on his side for the purpose of saving the money which he had in the breast-pocket of his coat. One of his assailants placed his foot on his neck, and the other man his foot upon the lower part of his body. In the tail-pocket of his coat the prosecutor had a ledger and a book of poems. The thieves felt this parcel, and probably imagining that this was the booty they sought, they tore off the tail of the coat and decamped. They were thus disappointed in getting the money, which amounted to about five hundred pounds. The prosecutor was severely wounded, and remained ill for some time. The facts as to the robbery and the circumstances which accompanied it were not disputed, and the question for the consideration of the jury was the identification of the prisoner.

The next deed of violence which the student of our civilisation will find narrated in this same newspaper, is of another type:

SOUTHWARK.—STREET OUTRAGES.—James Turner, twenty, was brought before Mr. Woolrych by Walker, 30 M, and Beechy, 265 M, charged with assaulting Mr. Andrew Cotton, in the Blackfriars-road, and robbing him of a valuable gold watch and chain.

Mr. William Seymour, a boot and shoemaker in the Blackfriars-road, said, that on Tuesday afternoon last he was standing near his doorway, when he saw the prisoner and another young ruffian following the prosecutor. He heard them make some remark, pointing to the latter, which aroused his suspicions, and he was induced to look after them. At the corner of Friar-street the prisoner's companion crossed over to make signals to the former, who had followed Mr. Cotton down Friar-street. He accordingly proceeded that way, and when he was about to turn into Friar-street, he met the prisoner running with a watch in his right hand. He ran across the Blackfriars-road into Webber-street; but, as he was surrounded by a gang of desperate young ruffians, he was afraid to pursue him any further, consequently he escaped. Witness then returned to Friar-street, where he met the prosecutor in a very excited state, and was told by him that he had just been robbed of a watch and chain by a young fellow who had run into the Blackfriars-road. Witness told him he knew the thief, and he accompanied him to the police-station, and gave information of the robbery, with a description of the prisoner. He had frequently seen the prisoner and his companions attempt to rob people near his shop.

The prosecutor, an elderly person, said that he was a brass-founder, and carried on business in Union-street, Borough-road. On Tuesday afternoon he was returning to the latter place, and just as he was turning out of Friar-street into Union-street, some young fellow came suddenly in front of him, struck him a heavy blow on the chest, and then

snatched his watch and chain, and before he could recover himself he made his escape. He then met last witness, and told him he had just been robbed of his watch and chain; and then he gave information to the police. He could not swear that the prisoner was the man who robbed him.

When police-constable 265 M apprehended the prisoner a mob surrounded him, and would have rescued him had not another constable come up; and, after a severe struggle, he was secured.

Mather, 80 M, who had also been in search of the prisoner, asked for a remand, to enable him to produce a witness who actually saw the prisoner steal the watch and chain.

Mr. Woolrych accordingly remanded him for a week.

Mr. Seymour complained to his worship that some of the prisoner's companions had threatened him if he came forward and gave evidence on the case.

Mr. Woolrych told him if he could point out those persons he would have them before him on a warrant, and punish them severely.

But the catalogue of rough deeds published on this particular day is not exhausted yet:

Daniel Briant, twenty-nine, James Bryan, sixteen, John Donovan, seventeen, and Catherine Flynn, eighteen, of Rosemary-lane, were charged with being concerned in a robbery, and with assaulting several police-constables in the execution of their duty.

Thomas Jones, a ship's steward, stated that on Saturday night, at a quarter-past twelve o'clock, he was passing along Rosemary-lane with a parcel containing a pair of boots and a pair of trousers under his arm, and upon his arrival opposite the end of a narrow court, called Seven Star-alley, the parcel was knocked away from him. He turned round, and saw Donovan close behind him. The parcel was picked up by a man in front of him, who ran up a court. He followed him, and was intercepted by a mob of ruffians and disorderly characters, who sympathised with the thief, and who attacked him and knocked him down. He was obliged to retreat, and if he had not done so he should have been murdered.

Gully, Watts, and Holmstrong, police-constables, who apprehended Donovan and James Bryan, said they were violently assaulted by them, thrown, struck, and maltreated with bricks and other missiles. Daniel Briant threw a stone which struck one of the constables. The woman Flynn threw mud and rubbish at the police, and as Gully was entering the station she slapped his face.

And once more:

William Mansfield was charged with assaulting Henry Lane, rifling his pockets, and robbing him of a written character near London-bridge.

The prosecutor said he was a labourer, and on Saturday night, about twelve o'clock, he had been with his wife to Bermondsey. They passed up the steps leading from Tooley-street towards London-bridge. Witness was in front a little way, and just as he got at the top of the steps the prisoner came up and knocked his cap off. Witness replaced it, and took no further notice of him, when the prisoner struck him and put his hand in his pockets. Witness then seized hold of him, when he struck him again and got away. Finding that he had been robbed, he caught hold of him again, when he was secured by a City constable. Mr. Woolrych observed, as he should like to know something of the prisoner, he should remand him for a week.

A tolerable list this for one day, and for the metropolis and the suburbs only. Yet on the next there is something doing at the police-courts too.

SOUTHWARK. — ASSAULTS ON THE POLICE. — William Carroll, a powerful-looking fellow, was charged before Mr. Woolrych with assaulting police-constable 256 M, and doing grievous bodily harm to 23 M, while in the execution of their duty.

The prisoner was causing a disturbance in Snow's-fields, about one o'clock in the morning. He was requested to go home quietly by 256 M, when he immediately rushed upon the officer and struck and kicked him in a violent manner. On 23 M coming to the assistance of his brother-constable, he, too, was savagely maltreated by the prisoner. Both officers were suffering severely from the effects of the blows and kicks.

It was stated that the prisoner had been previously convicted of assaults on constables.

Mr. Woolrych fully committed him for trial.

WIFE BEATING. — James Moore, a labourer, was charged with committing a brutal assault on his wife, and sentenced to three months' hard labour.

THAMES. — AFFRAY ON BOARD SHIP. — Joseph Walker, a touter, was brought before Mr. Paget, charged with assaulting several persons on board the Duke of Sunderland.

The ship arrived in the London Dock basin, Shadwell, on Saturday night. On Monday morning a great many persons boarded her to solicit custom of the sailors; and among them were clothiers, crimps, lodging-house keepers, touters, runners, and others. The prisoner was among them, and he went into the fore-castle to remove a mariner's chest and effects. A man named George William Gray, the butcher of the vessel, and now acting as ship-keeper, directed him to leave the vessel, which he refused to do, and struck Gray. Daniel Anderson, the chief mate, who had the command of the ship in the absence of the captain, went to the assistance of Gray, and he was violently assaulted by the prisoner, who struck him on the face and blackened his eye. A dock constable, named Francis Andus, took the prisoner into custody, and he was also assaulted and his coat was torn.

Mr. Paget sent the prisoner to jail for four months, with hard labour.

There is no possibility, in such an article as this, of extracting many such cases at length. One or two may be thus given, but the rest must be compressed, and given only in the aggregate.

It is an unquestionable fact that the impression left by even a hasty glance at the police and trial reports, published during a period of twelve or thirteen weeks, is dispiriting in the extreme. Records of violence and bloodshed—more especially of violence inflicted on women—are reported on every page. "No day without a line," says the Latin proverb, but this is a line which is traced in blood. The list of these rough doings is a long one, but there is little variety in it. On one day we read of the cruelty of William Barrett, accused of violently assaulting and threatening his wife—a "mere girl" fifteen months married—of striking her, as she was sitting on a chair nursing her baby, repeatedly in the face, of his threatening to stab her, and to throw her out of the window, of his trying to do so, and, failing in that, of his seizing the baby by its long clothes and swinging it round, swearing that "he would be rid of it." This is one day's reading. On another, the story is of a husband, who, after an altercation with his wife, throws her down, kneels upon

her, and, squeezing her throat violently, causes a rupture of the gall-duct and the liver, which eventually bring about the woman's death. We have these facts on the testimony of an eye-witness, a little girl who calls these two her father and mother.

Another day's record comes before us, and we read, this time, about Joseph Wood, a Crimean pensioner, and his wife. These two, on the days when the pension was paid, were in the habit of going the round of the public-houses and getting very drunk. On one such occasion—again the principal witness is a child of the accused criminal—they come home specially drunk and quarrelsome, and the man orders his wife to go up-stairs, and demands, for some drunken reason, that the blinds shall be drawn down. The woman goes up-stairs, as she is told to do, and gets under the bed, apprehensive, no doubt, of what may be coming, and thinking, perhaps, in her drunken stupidity, that her husband, in *his* drunken stupidity, will forget all about her if he does not see her. He does not do so, however; but coming up-stairs himself sends one of the children, a boy, down below for "a razor and a knife." Then the man, as this wretched boy testifies, begins, at first, cutting the woman with these instruments as she lies under the bed; but presently afterwards drags her out from her hiding-place, and, getting her on to the hearth, falls furiously upon her, beats her with a "bed-rail," and, in the end, kills her. More instances of rage and detestation at work between married people are forthcoming as we read on. Here is the case of Ann Slack, killed by her husband at the Holmes, Doncaster. As, in most of the other instances quoted, drink seems to have been the original cause of the dissensions which sprung up between these two people. The woman, it seems, was addicted to drink, and was in the habit of pawning the smaller articles of furniture in the house for the purpose of supplying herself with liquor. The man, "up to the last two years, had conducted himself respectably, but within that period he also had fallen into intemperate habits." His conduct towards his wife was, however, generally kind and forbearing, and he had endeavoured to reclaim her before he had himself fallen into drunken habits. The old monotonous story follows. The man comes home drunk, finds his wife drunk also; they quarrel, and the man drives his case-knife into the woman's neck, and the blow, dividing the carotid artery, she dies in a very few minutes.

These assaults on women do not always terminate fatally. The women survive them sometimes, and go about their ordinary avocations, maimed, and bruised, and disfigured, as we may see for ourselves, if we choose to frequent the courts and by-streets about Drury-lane and Seven Dials, or, indeed, in any other "low neighbourhood." We might have met with a poor woman thus disfigured, in the Clerkenwell district, if our occasions had taken us there, a few weeks ago. Let us hear what is to be heard about her. She was married, it

seems, to a man named Stallard, who assaulted her three weeks after marriage, and with whom she had lived very unhappily since. One night, reduced to desperation, and afraid of his violence, she took a dangerous step, and locked him out of the house. Of course this only inflamed his anger. He broke open the door, seized a candlestick, and beat her with it on the head and arms. Her cries of murder brought assistance, and she was saved from further violence; but the injuries which she had received were visible a week afterwards, and caused her much pain.

Here is another instance of assault which does not terminate fatally, but *only* in bruises and contusions. This case and the last are reported in the same newspaper. "Frederick Jenks" is the name of the assailant this time, and he is described as a labourer, and accused of committing a violent assault upon his wife, "a young woman of respectable appearance," who states that her husband had frequently ill-used her, and that he was imprisoned two years before for six months for assaulting her. One evening, recently, he came in and made use of violent threats towards her. "He left the house, and returned about ten o'clock, and the moment she opened the door he rushed upon her, struck her a severe blow on the breast, and knocked her down. While she was down, he struck her several blows, and deliberately *kicked her on the left eye*. She remained insensible for a short time, and on endeavouring to rise, he seized a chair, and threatened to dash her brains out." The woman's cries brought assistance when things had reached this point, and the man was given in custody.

These attacks on women, of which we read, are not confined to acts of violence committed by men on their *wives*. In one of these reports, with which we are occupying ourselves, we find a son guilty of the almost impossible crime, as it seems, of assaulting his mother. Let us hear her own evidence against her son. It is very terrible. "Mrs. Colman, an aged, respectable person, said that she carried on business as an upholsterer at 48, Union-street, Kennington-road. On Saturday night the prisoner went to her house in a state of drunkenness, and abused her in a most fearful manner. He struck her two violent blows in the face, and knocked her down. While on the ground, he followed up the outrage by kicking her on the head and body. He continued this conduct for some time, and threatened her with a knife and a poker. She was very ill from the effects of the prisoner's violence, and went in bodily fear."

Surely after this it is unnecessary to quote any more instances of assaults committed by men upon women. We may get away from this unpalatable subject—only, however, to approach another.

Perhaps next to the frequency of those savage attacks upon women, which we have just been considering, there is no single circumstance more calculated to strike any attentive observer of our crime records than the continual recurrence of

the most violent and savage assaults on the members of our London police force. As we read the details of such brutality, we get at last to wonder that men can be found to do the duty of policemen at all. What a life theirs is! The things which most men carefully avoid, it is their business to put themselves in the way of. To walk along lonely roads by night, to pass through notoriously low neighbourhoods, to frequent the haunts of well-known bad characters—all these are proceedings from which most men shrink, even when it is necessary to engage in them once in a way. The policeman encounters them habitually, day after day, and, which is worse, night after night. With most of us it is a study to avoid all intercourse with thieves and garotters, and, above all things, and at any cost, to keep out of "rows." The policeman is habitually brought in contact with those bad characters just alluded to, while to get into rows, instead of keeping out of them, is the very essence of his duty. And then there is nothing glorious or picturesque, or externally attractive, about the achievements of the policeman. The battles which he engages in are squalid, ignoble brawls. No poet chooses one of them as a theme on which his muse may exercise herself, nor does any "own correspondent" chronicle their details. The policeman does not march into action with trumpets sounding and colours flying, and with troops of comrades round about him in all directions. Single-handed, and with no stimulating influences to urge him on—unless a stout heart and a sense of duty may be so regarded—he dashes in among a crowd of foul-mouthed, violent ruffians, and fastens on his man. "Acting on information I had received"—so runs the tale which is told so often that we take it as a thing of course—"I went to a house in Slaughter-court, Whitechapel, and took the prisoner into custody." How often do we read those words, or others like them, and bearing the same purport; but do we fully understand and realise what we read?

When "acting upon information that he had received," Policeman A 1 starts on an expedition into what is called a low neighbourhood, in search of somebody who is "wanted," he goes deliberately, and knowing what he is about, among the members of a hostile tribe, all of whom hate him with a deadly hatred, and are prepared to thwart him at every turn, and to take every opportunity of hindering him in the performance of the duty which he has got to do. He goes among a set of ruffians who have all, as they suppose, plenty of wrongs sustained at his hands, or those of his comrades, for which they long to take vengeance, and who are restrained by no human feeling from the commission of the cruellest and most dastardly acts. There is surely evidence of more real courage given by a readiness to encounter such perils as these than by many a showy act of daring which has the promise of winning renown and glory for its prospective reward.

Almost daily we are made acquainted with the details of fresh outrages committed on the

members of this ill-used force. We have almost got used to them. It is without surprise, though still with undiminished disgust, that we read the accounts of those acts of brutality which are now of every-day occurrence. We read, to take an instance, indignantly, indeed; but still regarding it too much as a matter of course, such a case as that recently recorded of William Cannon, *well known for violent assaults on the police*, and who is charged with assaulting Police-constable Chapple, and breaking his leg in two places. Police-constable Chapple tells admirably well the simple story of how it all happened, and it deserves, as indeed does the whole report of the case, to be put on record, as symptomatic of the exact state of our civilisation in 1867.

"About twelve o'clock on the night of the 7th of September," says John Chapple, "I was in Frederick-street, St. John's Wood, when I saw a crowd come out of the Prince George of Cumberland public-house. The prisoner was there, and knocked another man down. He wanted to fight, and the man gave him into custody for the assault. He had been drinking, but knew what he was about. I took him into custody. He swore he would not go, and I told him he had better go quietly. He struck me on the side of my head, and we fell. I was on the top. I rose up, and pulled him up. He made use of frightful language, and said he would not go. He struck at me again, and we fell a second time. Then he tried to kick me, and called upon his companions to come and get him away. A man caught hold of my great-coat and pulled me up. The prisoner got up and kicked me violently just above my left ankle. The blow broke my leg in two places, and I fell. The other man is well known, and there is a warrant against him, but he has absconded."

Here the evidence of this, the unfortunate principal in the affair, comes to an end. Other witnesses appear, and finish the story among them. It comes out that there was a man named Cooley present, who, when the policeman lay on the ground with his leg broken, said: "Let me jump upon the — and finish him." He was prevented from doing so by his wife. Indeed the women present on this occasion seem to have been possessed of some human qualities. One of them tried to get at the policeman's rattle, that she might spring it and bring assistance. Another—Sophia Green—by all means let her name survive—came battling through the crowd, and, seeing the ruffian, Cannon, battering the unfortunate policeman as he lay helpless on the ground, caught the brute by the coat-tail, and tried to pull him off; and the coat-tail coming away in her hands, got presently a firmer hold upon some other part of his dress, and did really succeed in tearing him away from his victim. A good woman this, in her way, surely! "The crowd gave no assistance," she said, in concluding her evidence, "but stood looking on, as if it were a play."

This is a story deserving of much and serious consideration. The position of that policeman,

with that throng of entirely antagonistic people about him, going in among them single-handed to do what he had to do, is in reality a terrible one. The courage which this same John Chapple must have possessed can only have been of the best and most exalted kind; and it would be a difficult thing to explain why such service, as a man like this renders to the State, should not be rewarded by the Victoria Cross.

The acts of ruffianism which are here exhibited are very far from being the only specimens cases of similar brutality which we might quote if space permitted, or if any object was to be gained by the multiplication of instances. We read continually of policemen being knocked down, of their being pelted with bricks, rubbish, mud; of dangerous assaults by kicking. We read of officers suffering severely from the effects of blows and kicks; of a policeman thrown down seven or eight times, and nearly throttled; of another struck in the face with a chair. For many months the newspapers have been full of such things, and they continue to report them still. On the very day when these words are written the old story is told again, with one or two new features. Soldiers are the offenders this time. Two of them, accompanied by a woman, fasten upon a policeman outside the Marble Arch, and require him, at twelve o'clock at night, to let them into the park. The policeman refuses, and is instantly set upon by the soldiers (a third having in the mean time come up and joined the party), and so cruelly maltreated that he is disabled for nearly a month. It is a curious feature of this case that a thief, who happens to be passing at the time, comes up while the unhappy constable is being mauled, and recommends the soldiers to take the policeman to a retired part of the park and there "finish him quietly."

It is impossible to study these records of crime, and of the punishments awarded to crime, without being struck by the strange inconsistencies which, as it appears to persons unacquainted with the intricacies of law, are from time to time perpetrated in our courts of justice. There may be, it is true, circumstances connected with some of these cases which do not appear in the reports, and which might, if recorded, affect the opinion which we form in reading them. But of what is not put upon record we cannot, of course, be expected to take cognisance, and as such reports stand, they do certainly seem sometimes a little startling. The most ordinary newspaper reader cannot fail to observe, as he goes through his police reports and his trials, that what we call luck or chance has, to all appearance, a considerable amount of influence in deciding the fate of the convicted prisoner, which seems often to depend on something altogether independent of the published evidence. That "something" may in certain cases be a valid something, the legitimacy of whose influence we should admit if we were made acquainted with it; but we are often not a little mystified to find offences of apparently exactly the same nature punished on one occasion with remarkable severity, and on another

with equally remarkable leniency. Or we observe that some outrage, which makes our blood boil with indignation, is dealt with in the mildest fashion, while, at the same time, to some quite small misdeed a very heavy penalty is awarded.

Taking still the newspaper records of the last few months, we find many instances of what certainly looks like inconsistency in the distributing of those penalties which the law has power to inflict. Some of these, however, are comprehensible when the principle on which such penalties are awarded comes to be considered. Take, for instance, the two following cases, the first reported on the 6th of August, the second on the 10th of September:

BEFORE MR. PAYNE.—Henry Johnson, eighteen, was charged with stealing a watch from the person of Mr. Stanley Dent, of 34, Great Tower-street. Mr. Abram prosecuted; Mr. Harris defended. The prosecutor was standing on the steps of Her Majesty's Theatre, about twelve, on the night of the 9th of July, when the prisoner came up, snatched away his watch, and ran off. The prosecutor followed him into Charles-street, where he was stopped by a policeman, who asked him why he was running, to which he replied that he did not know. Almost immediately after the prisoner was caught, some one in the crowd handed the prosecutor's watch to the constable. The jury returned a verdict of guilty. The prisoner had been previously convicted of stealing a pocket-book from the person of Mr. Clay, M.P., in the lobby of the House of Lords, in 1863. Other convictions also were proved against him. Mr. Payne sentenced him to be kept in penal servitude for seven years.

CLERKENWELL.—John Burke, aged seventeen, who refused both his address and occupation, and Edward Dobson, aged nineteen, a brass finisher giving his address St. John-street-road, Clerkenwell, were charged before Mr. Cooke with assaulting and stealing from the person of Mr. George Hopson Blowers, a draper, of 12, Commerce-place, Brixton-road, a watch of the value of six pounds six shillings, at High-street, Clerkenwell. The prosecutor was seeing a lady into one of the Barnsbury omnibuses, round which were a great number of persons. While doing so he was violently pushed against, and heard a snap as if his watch-guard had been broken. He looked and saw the prisoner Burke trying to get out of the crowd. He collared hold of him, and then he was violently pushed against, and an attempt was made to rescue him. Assistance was rendered to the prosecutor, and Burke was pushed into the Bluecoat Boy public-house, and there the watch was taken from his hand. Dobson, who had been seen by the police in company with the other prisoner, was afterwards apprehended, and then he said that he knew nothing of the prisoner or of the charge. The prisoners pleaded guilty. Mr. Cooke said that had anything been known against the character of the prisoners he should have felt it his duty to send the case for trial. He should pass on them the highest sentence that he could, namely, that they be imprisoned and kept to hard labour in the House of Correction for six calendar months.

At first sight, the difference between the punishment inflicted in the first of these cases, and that awarded in the second, seems very startling. The charge is the same in both, snatching a watch from the person of its owner in the street. Yet this same offence is visited in one instance with penal servitude for seven

years, and in the other with six months of imprisonment. This instance is not an isolated one. On the 29th of August, James Wratten was accused of robbing Frederick Minasi of four feet of lead, and, by a second indictment, of stealing fifty pounds of lead, the property of John Price. The quantity of lead stolen is very small, and the offence, one would be apt to say, not a very terrible one; yet the sentence upon James Wratten—against whom *about a dozen previous convictions* were put in—was that he be kept in penal servitude for seven years. The same enormous penalty was awarded, three days later, to George Lane, who “pleaded guilty to stealing a shirt,” but who had been “previously convicted of felony.” In every one of these instances of severe sentences awarded to comparatively light offences, it will be seen that there are previous convictions on record against the prisoner. When a man has been convicted a certain number of times, his case, to all appearance, gets to be regarded as certainly hopeless. At any rate, hopeless or not, a long sequestration from temptation, and from the possibility of offending again, is judged to be necessary, and so they put him out of harm’s way for a time, to get him out of what may be called a felonious habit.

The only thing which one does not quite see is, why this theory should not be more completely carried out. If these previous convictions affect in so marked a degree the sentences of thieves and small pilferers, why should they not be equally powerful when it is a question of assault and battery? In many of these cases of brutal attack on the police, which we have heard so much of lately, these same “previous convictions”—whether a magistrate’s or a justice’s does not, or should not, matter—have been proved, and yet the short sentence only has been pronounced. When certain ruffians, were charged with a murderous assault upon Police-constable Harding, the report informs us that the men were “well known to the police.” The magistrate was reminded that one of them—Shea by name—had just had four months for an assault on the police. Surely this was a “previous conviction.” Yet the ruffian is only sentenced, after all, to two months of imprisonment. How is this? He has just had four months, and is none the better for it, and the magistrate tries him next with two. Is this logical, in the strict sense of the word?

Of inadequate sentences, pronounced against persons convicted of acts of violence, the instances are numerous, as almost any day’s police-sheet will show. Here—to take one specimen—here is James Roach, an Irishman, who first assaults a woman indecently, then strikes her in the face, then throws the policeman, who comes to take him up, seven or eight times, kicking him, and nearly throttling him—what does he get for all this? A paltry two months in the House of Correction! Here is another

Irishman, who steals an umbrella, who assaults the person from whom he steals it, who attacks and kicks the policeman who takes him into custody, who attacks and kicks a second policeman who comes to the assistance of the first, taking a piece of skin, an inch and a half long, off this last one’s leg, who, on his way to the station, deliberately and wantonly kicks, and much injures, a little girl six years of age, and who is sentenced—to what? “To be imprisoned and kept to hard labour in the House of Correction for one calendar month!”

The severity of the sentences awarded to persons who are convicted of acts of dishonesty, as compared with those pronounced against such offenders as have just been mentioned, is sometimes very striking. It really almost seems as if offences against the purse have got to be regarded by our law as much more serious than those which are committed against the man who carries the purse. One or two cases, selected at random from the newspaper reports of the last few months, will show this very plainly. We find a milkman, who pleads guilty to an accusation of stealing a quart and a half pint of milk, sentenced to four months of imprisonment; and, in another case, published a few days later, that case—already alluded to—of an Irishman who, for kicking and maiming a couple of policemen, and committing other acts of savage violence, gets but one month—a fourth part of the sentence inflicted on the felonious milkman. In another instance, a pickpocket, who is detected practising his craft on the platform of the London and North-Western Railway, first strikes one policeman a furious blow on the mouth, and then kicks another—as the report says—“dangerously.” He is altogether so violent that he is obliged to be handcuffed. The sentence on this gentleman is edifying. He is condemned to three months of prison for attempting to pick pockets, and has two months, besides, for the assault on the police. Upon the whole, the impression conveyed by a diligent study of such cases as these, is, that it is less culpable to commit an aggravated assault, by which your victim is crippled, disabled from following his calling, and tormented with cruel pain, than to pick a pocket or steal sixpenny-worth of milk.

On Thursday, 12th December, will be published
THE

EXTRA DOUBLE NUMBER FOR CHRISTMAS,
ENTITLED

NO THOROUGHFARE.

BY CHARLES DICKENS
AND WILKIE COLLINS.

A NEW SERIAL STORY,
BY WILKIE COLLINS,

Will be commenced in the Number to be dated
Saturday, 4th of January next.

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL.

CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1867.

[PRICE 2d.]

THE DEAR GIRL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BELLA DONNA," "NEVER FORGOTTEN," &c.

CHAPTER XVI. THE OLD HOME.

MR. WEST, far away in England, read the account of the terrible storm at Dieppe, which later, indeed, travelled up some of the finest parts of the French country, unroofing houses, scattering produce, swelling rivers, and doing other mischief. All this, with the details of the gallant rescue, was duly set out in the vivacious *Galignani*—most pleasant of caterers, unwearied in his effort to find variety, and duly posted by Miss West. He wondered who this Colonel Vivian was, who sustained the English name with such heroism, and who was suffering from dangerous wounds; having been dashed out of the boat against a spar; and for a moment, as he turned over the various names of the places, it occurred to him that it might be the handsome stranger he had met as he came away. The uneasiness was but for a moment. Had he seen the French paper, the *Gazette*, he would have been amused by an account from quite a different point of view. For, characteristically, after the first official sympathy and congratulation, and the mayor had personally paid his compliments to Davy and his companions, popular feeling seemed to incline altogether to the two Frenchmen who had assisted, and the whole matter became only one more instance of the "*gloire du peuple Français*." This was the stuff with which her marine was to be filled, with very faint allusion to the collaboration of Jean Davi et de M. Vivienne (named, of course, after the well-known street in Paris), "*qui se comporta avec une admirable fermeté et un phlegme vraiment Britannique*." Decorations presently arrived for the two brave French heroes; but "Jean Davi" and his friends were suffered to depart in the collier.

Mr. West stayed in London a few days, where he had not been for some years. He went about with fresh curiosity, admiring the changes that had taken place in his absence. Some feeling like "What a charming world, what a pretty one, and what curious things are to be seen in it!" rose in his mind. Hitherto he had passed all these things by. He was now awakening as from a dream. The first

thing he determined on was to go down to Westown, and see the old place.

Westown was in the pleasant county of Hertfordshire, among the stately woods which spread out towards Stevenage. It was a little estate, with a modest red brick house of about a hundred years old, but of an older pattern.

He had not been here since he was eighteen or twenty. It seemed to him double the time; an age ago; a miserable era of convulsion and gloom, as though he had been in a jail for some crime, and from which he always kept his eyes turned away. Yet, as he came back now, he had no such feelings. He had given no notice of his coming, went down by coach, was "dropped" at an inn which he well knew, and where he took a chaise on to Westown.

He reached it about six o'clock in the evening, and drew up at the gateway, which seemed the entrance to some old churchyard; so wild and rank was it in the fulness of moss and ivy, and every straggling luxuriance which overgrew it. The rusty gate, whose hinge had worn away, hung all awry. No one came to open it; so he got down, and, with the driver's aid, lifted it back, then walked up the avenue slowly. It might have been a path through the fields, and was almost indistinguishable. Then he came on the house itself, compact, low, and of that cheerful kindly red, the tone of which is now as much lost to us as the Sèvres blue. It, too, was all overgrown with a wild greenery, lank and drooping, from among which, however, the patches of cheerful colour peeped out brightly, like a young girl's healthy cheek from under a veil. No wonder; it was nearly a twenty years' growth, unrestricted and unchecked.

And old man opened the door, and looked out at him with impatience and doubt. "What do you want?" he said. "The family don't stop here, and never will; and it's not to be let."

"Why, don't you remember me, Wilkes?" said Mr. West, gently.

The old man peered again, started, and then said, slowly and hesitatingly, "What, Master Gilbert?" He did not go into the rapture which is, alas! like so many other things, conventional. The weeping and covering hands with kisses of old servants has passed out. Perhaps this member of the community received "the old master" with misgivings. His pleasant tenure and long

rule was to be disturbed. He had his family there, kept up part of the garden, sold the fruit, and did very well indeed. Old servants, indeed! The inconvenient side of that relation has been often dwelt on as almost comic; but now *we* have become the old servants, and are ungrateful and thankless to them, for all their kindness while they stayed with us.

Old Wilkes, however, was a good soul. There was a fire burning in the study. "Well, Mr. Gilbert," he said that night, when he had come up to gossip a little, "I mind this room nigh twenty year ago, on that night when the master, poor man, heard tell of you and the curate's little daughter, and sent me out to look for you and bring you in here."

"I remember it, Wilkes," said West, looking steadily in the fire, "and it has risen before me often since. It was a terrible night."

He sat pensively, looking at the picture before him; and yet in Dieppe, when in the little French rooms, when the scene came back on him, his sister had seen him rise abruptly, and almost rush away to walk. If it would *not* leave him, he might fly from it. She always knew what this meant. There was a change now.

"It was a sin and a shame, and I told him so," said the old servant. "It was no use, and it had gone past curing. Better have married her, though she were a beggarly curate's daughter, than——"

"Than have her die so miserably, Wilkes," he said.

"You might have done it, Mr. Gilbert, I often thought since. The old master was quick-tempered, but he'd have got over it in a year or two."

"No, never, never, Wilkes," said West, getting up to walk about. "I knew him, too. He swore to me on that old Bible which he was always reading, that if I went on with it, he would make it his life's work to hunt her and her father to the death; and he could do it, you know. You remember poor Holden, his tenant?"

"Ay, sir; he worked him well enough."

"I thought it for the best. I meant well, though I know what people said—that I gave her up, poor child, to save my estate."

"Ay; they said *that*, sure enough."

"I was sure they did. I was innocent, Wilkes; but I suffered for it. Eighteen years was a long atonement."

"So it were; so it were."

"And if I had only waited, or gained a little time—just four years more, when he died——"

"Well," said the old man, "I'm after thinking, though, wouldn't she have been living to this moment, but for that? So you see that it's a long time after all; and givin' up your whole life, Mr. Gilbert, in these furrin parts to repentance. Ah, the poor old place; it will never have the family in it again. And, indeed, so best, so best; for now it's not fit, and it's a scandal, so it is, the way it's in."

West turned to look at him, smiling. "Well, Wilkes, my old friend, I have some news for you. There has been enough of misery and melancholy, and I see no use in going on with that. Eighteen years is long enough, surely; and if we were to die a thousand times, we can't mend what is past. I begin to think we can show grief and feeling better by doing our duties than by moping, and pining, and idling. So do you know, Wilkes, what has brought me down?"

"Oh, how can I say, Mr. Gilbert? Maybe this, and maybe that; maybe one thing, maybe t'other."

He was growing dry and uneasy. Mr. West did not see it.

"What do you say to this news, my good old friend? We shall be coming back here, and shall open the old place once more. Clear away all this; pull down, and put in thorough repair. What do you say to that?"

"Repair!" said the old servant, testily; "why, it would take forty-five thousand pounds—no less—to do that."

This number was his favourite estimate of expense, size, time—any object that he had seen being forty-five times the height of that house, or as far off as forty-five times the road from here to London. But he did not receive the news with welcome.

"Why, it will take forty-five men, no less, every day—every day—for a year. Repairs, indeed! You may as well pull every stone of it to the ground!"

"No fear of that, Wilkes. A clever fellow is coming down to-morrow to look at it. He knows what to do, and will take care that nothing shall be touched but what is necessary. We shall turn in the workmen, too. Lots of employment for the labourers about. Clear the place in time; give these trees breathing-room."

"Then there's few labourers you'd get about here. Since the labour was stopped fifteen years ago, who was to employ them?"

"They'll come fast enough, never fear, Wilkes, too many of them, I'm afraid. And then for the furnishing and decorating; and you, Wilkes, shall look after it. What would you like to be, now? Steward, butler, what? Choose yourself, now."

"Oh, that's all well enough, Mr. Gilbert. Where would the like of me get my years and strength for *that*? But see here, Mr. Gilbert," continued the old man, slowly, "what's this for? Is it that you're bringing home some one—a slip of a creature?"

"I don't say that, Wilkes. Why, wouldn't you like one of the old stock to be here?"

"It's a foolish thing, and always was a foolish thing," went on the old man, "and leads to no good. The keeper up yonder there, a man of a good fifty, took up with a child of twenty, only two year ago, and where is he now? He's there; but where is *she*?"

"My good old friend," said West, a little provoked, "you are getting foolish, and talk

absurdly. I am not a gamekeeper, nor fifty either, nor forty, for that matter."

"It won't do, and it never does," went on Mr. Wilkes, in the same discontented strain. "It's folly, and ends in folly, or worse. If you're for pulling down the old place, and cutting the trees, to please a child with a pretty face, mind you've had the warning."

"But I've had no supper, Wilkes," said Mr. West, a little impatiently. "The old kitchen chimney draws still, I know. I saw the smoke. See what they can do for me, like a good old fellow."

It was a curious night for Gilbert West. Later, when the little meal was done, and a bottle of the old wine found in the cellar drunk, he himself took a lamp and the keys, and walked over the ancient house. Everywhere was decay; the paper was falling from the walls, the boards were decayed. He paused in every corner, for with each was associated some scene or memory. Here was his father's bedroom, and that bedstead, whose canopy shook and nodded at him like the plumes of a catafalque. From that bed had angry, trembling arms waved and menaced him; from that bed had fiery eyes flashed, and an angry voice thundered expulsion, misery, punishment. At the foot of that bed he had made a weak submission. Here, below, was the library, the books mouldy and damp, the air close, where another scene had taken place. A small trembling figure—a pretty, pale, trembling girl—had pleaded for herself and for her father, curate to the old church whose tower he could see from the top window; and here, where the poachers and vagrants were brought in and judged, was she also sentenced. These things came back on him more vividly than ever they had done during his lonely walks up the bleak hills over Dieppe; and, with something like reproach, he asked himself "how he could ever bring himself to forget them?" But a hundred suggestions—delusive reasonings—came rushing in to reassure him. What is logic to one in his state? Was his life to go by in idle moaning over the past, in vain reverie over old ruins, old moral tombstones, instead of practical work, practical usefulness, joined, if you will, to a tender and judicious recollection of what was gone? Eighteen years of dismal wandering was surely a handsome homage enough. Yet somehow, as he lay down to rest in his old boy's room, he seemed to hear rung at his ear the awkward warning of the old servant.

CHAPTER XVII. A WRECK.

On the next day arrived Mr. Jenkinson, the clever and "adapting" young architect, who was later to develop into the well-known reviver of the mediæval style, and who was indeed now studying the best models at home and abroad, and surely laying the foundation of the great reputation he later earned. How many of the asylums, poor-houses, institutions, churches, with which our happy England is dotted over,

fitted thickly, dappled brick structures—piebald almost—owe their inspiration to him and his genius! In little rows of almshouses, dainty showy little gems, gables, and spires, and an arched colonnade running in front, he is specially happy. No one manipulates coloured bricks like him, or with such surprising servility of fancy—who does not know "middle-age" Jenkinson, as he is pleasantly styled in the profession? Many of our noblest monster hotels—dashing and florid in the conception, running wild in windows—and railway stations, are his creation. A spirited young artist, he ran down to Westown, and was walking gaily round the house, with oblong book and pencil in hand, his head put well back. Mr. West wondered at his fertility of device. If one thing did not suit, he had another ready in a second. In twenty minutes he had the whole arranged; "we run up a short stumpy campanile at the corner, to give a rococo look, and break the monotony; a wooden verandah running round the corner at the other end; bow-windows, and terrace-work, and vases." Inside, we break in a door here," "throw out a window there, take in these two little closets to the hall, and get up a short mediæval stair. All this was what he called mere patching and piecing, and would take little or no money—a bagatelle. Perhaps middle-age Jenkinson's principle is not such a bad one after all, and this judicious touching might save many an old house.

Mr. West remained three days, and before he went saw an ornamental gardener, and many labourers busy with the clearing. The place was, indeed, a perfect jungle. As he looked on the bright morning from the steps, he seemed to see Lucy's figure moving down the walk that ran up the centre. He had, indeed, often described it to her, and her eyes used to quicken with interest as he spoke. She revered those old places. "And the quicker you get all done," he said, from the window of his chaise, "the better." The old retainer, Wilkes, still dissatisfied at "the rookem-rackem" work going on—such was his strange phrase—turned away, shaking his head, as the chaise drove off.

In London again, Mr. West found plenty to do. The time was indeed too short. He lighted on old friends. He was to them as one returned from beyond the seas. He had been called to the Bar, and went down to search out some friends of the profession. Many, indeed, had often mentioned him in his absence, and said that if West had only stuck to the profession he would have been at the top of the tree. Wonderful tree! Surprising climbers! And yet those perched on that uncomfortable apex looking down and seeing those below crawling up, may wonder and smile at the infinite labour and pain of the progress, the sore and torn hands, the bleeding marks, to say nothing of the maimed and bruised who have fallen; and lying dead or wounded thickly round the root. Mr. Justice Banting had been heard to ask what had become of that intelligent young

fellow who had been with Colter, Q.C., in Tox and Tyrrell. West went to see Fox Selby, who had started with himself, and was now a faded rusty Q.C., with no time to snatch his dinner, up half the night—in short, what is called, “doing admirably” at the Bar. Fox Selby looked up at him, weak-eyed and fretful. He was peering into a little ocean of briefs bubbling up before him like waves. He recollected his old friend, and was as glad to see him as such a body could be. In a moment he had asked him to dine on—let him see—Sunday.

On Sunday Mr. West went, and found his friend, whom he had left a cheerful bachelor with no responsibility, with a stout wife and seven children. The eldest girl was sixteen. After dinner, Mr. West asked about other friends, and then came to what was on his mind—Harcourt Dacres.

To be sure, Fox Selby had lost sight of him for some time. Used to know him when he went circuit. He was a good amusing creature, would make you laugh by the hour; but, between ourselves, was a man one should give a very wide berth to—a fellow that would ask you for a five-pound note on the day he was introduced to you. Mr. Selby mentioned this after a pause, and with mystery, as one of the most heinous crimes in the decalogue. Mr. West was prepared for it, and not so shocked as the other expected. “You know,” Selby went on, “there are stories about him—shady histories—borrowing from the young fellows just called. I don’t vouch for it, you know; but the poor devil couldn’t help himself—body and soul, he belonged to the Jews.”

This was the point, and Mr. West soon found what he wished to know—that a certain Isaacs was his chief creditor, and had nearly caught him when he was here last. He was told many a little history of him, having a dramatic interest in those details of shifts, and struggles, and desperate devices, which are, indeed, culpable, but are the gaspings of a drowning man struggling to keep his mouth above water.

For a week nearly Mr. West was busy following up this clue—visiting the strange dens where money-lenders lived, and having strange interviews with them. His business-like practical ways did something, his engagement for future settlement did more; everything was happily smoothed away, and Mr. Isaacs complimented him, and said nothing would give him greater pleasure than to do business *personally* with Mr. West; at which the latter bowed and smiled.

“She will be more pleased with this,” he thought, as he came away, “than with the house.”

This action and business was like the sea-side, or change of air. He enjoyed success. His sister wrote regularly, with a little news of the place, how Doctor Macan and Doctor White were raging against each other in the most scandalous way; how

there was a frantic craze to rush after the Guernsey Beauforts; how Mr. Blacker was more ridiculous and absurd than ever, and fast losing his head. But there was nothing about Lucy. He had, indeed, knowing her want of sympathy with this family, begged of her not to see much of them: “My dear Margery, I see you do not like them, and why should you punish yourself or punish them by being disagreeable? Much better keep away. She will write herself.”

Then he went down to Westown, saw that dexterous workmen had done wonders, and staying a few days, came up again. He was pleased with all this work.

“Now,” he said, “if I could only restore him with Sir John Trotter.” This seemed a difficult, almost a hopeless, business. Yet his spirits rose with the difficulty. He had a Scotch friend in London, whom he made out, and who knew another friend who was very intimate with Sir John. With this gentleman West was made acquainted, meeting him at a little dinner. “As for Sir John,” said he, “he is the most terrible little schemer in the world, and it is infinitely hard to approach him; but this moment, I am afraid, is the worst you could have chosen. His son’s illness has assumed a very unfortunate shape; in fact, as I heard this evening, something very like this,” and he touched his own forehead with his finger. “He has got his little borough, and he thinks he can move the empire with it; he thinks every one should be on his knees to him for this tremendous political lever. There was an Irish barrister he met, and delighted him with singing songs and telling stories, but who treated him in a very free-and-easy way, and, I believe, told him to be off with himself and his borough.” This character lived, as we have seen, at Trotterstown, N.B., and Mr. West, getting a letter of introduction, went down by the coach on the very next morning.

Inside was a sharp-looking, long-faced, sallow passenger—professional evidently. This gentleman was reading with a sort of challenging manner, his head on one side, a thick volume in yellow paper covers, and which Mr. West knew to be a French book. He was amused by the unconscious behaviour of the gentleman, who, at about every second page, moved uneasily in his place, turned over the leaf angrily, and uttered a whispered sound of impatience. It was like a discussion going on between a smooth, fluent arguer, whom nothing could put out, and an eager, angry opponent, who had not much command of language. At last he said aloud, “Pish! arrant rubbish! Who ever heard the like?” And Mr. West could not help laughing.

The other laughed too. “I am as absurd as this fellow,” he said; “but really these Frenchmen try one’s patience so much with their elegant generalities. Now, here’s this Poisson,” he added, turning round the cover of his book, “a fellow who enjoys a reputation. Poisson on Delusions. You know the book; fifth edi-

tion, and all that. Yet positively one-half is fine writing. Fancy one of our medical fellows writing such stuff. Bosh! I can't read French well. Here is the English of it: 'There is nothing more miserable than the condition of these poor creatures. Let us picture their condition a moment. The night sets in—the door of the cell is closed. He thinks of his friends. "Oh, come to me and help me in my abandonment," he cries.' And I assure you, sir, half a dozen pages of that stuff; and that's a medical book, sir!"

With this introduction, the two gentlemen grew friendly and communicative. It came out presently the stranger knew France very well, and Dieppe too. "Passed through it the other day. The fact is, there is an establishment near Paris in which I have two or three patients. You know, all that is my department. I dare say you have seen or heard of Adams on Idiocy. Well, I am Adams, and I do a good deal in the idiocy way. The French are more humane and skilful in their treatment, though when they come to theory, like this fellow, they break down. No, Poisson, my boy; you are a charlatan. I assure you the quantity of miles I have to get over, flying from one part of the world to the other to see this and that patient, is astonishing, and very fatiguing. Now, I am posting down to a baronet, who has got something wrong with his son—a great trial for him—an old friend of mine."

"What! Sir John Trotter?" said Mr. West, eagerly. "I was going to him also."

"Really?" cried the other, "a brother, a rival, a double-horse power. No?"

Mr. West smiled, and set him right. A long journey, a day and a night, and such companionship, dining together, travelling together, in those days often made warm friendships; and when they reached the Scotch town, and took a chaise together to go out to Trotterstown, the physician had learned what was his companion's errand, and had promised to aid it in every way. It was a gloomy hill, and they found Sir John to be a strange, short, wiry, eccentric little man. He was, besides, a nineteenth-century Jacobite, and had portraits and relics of "Charles Edward," and talked of the Pretender as if he were alive. The misfortune that was coming on his son seemed to affect him very little as compared with politics; and the physician's introduction of his friend as a gentleman whom he met on the road, and who had some business in that part of the country, seemed to him quite a matter of course. Politics was his craze, and he talked them at dinner, inveighing against what he called the "arrant old Whigs of 1688," who were the ruin of this country. "The present Royal line, sir, is effete. We want the true old stock back again. I am told it still exists in a Neapolitan house. Ah, if that could be followed up, and relations opened with them, there would be plenty found to rally round the old standard."

Mr. West had travelled, had seen that part of Italy where this royal house flourished, and, to the great interest of his host, described all of them minutely, especially the heir of the house, about whom Sir John was very curious. Sir John was a complete oddity, and the physician said, later, the infirmity of the son was but a stage off. Then, coming to talk of the French and Dieppe, the baronet started off:

"By the way, there was an Irishman I had to do with who lived there. I wonder what's become of him? He behaved very badly—a wild, scatterbrained fellow, but still uncommonly pleasant. I assure you he sang 'Charley is my darling,' in this very room, in the most ravishing way. It runs in my ears now. You could hear the pipes and the Highlanders coming up the street—as fine a thing as ever I heard. He spoke very free and easy, but independently. I couldn't blame him. What a voice and spirit! A true Celt! a true Celt, sir!"

With the baronet in this tone, it was not difficult, it may be conceived, for Mr. West to accomplish what he came for. And he went his way that night, after Sir John had seen him out to his carriage, with an assurance that he would be very glad to see Mr. Dacres there again, talk the matter over, and hear his noble-spirited friend join in "Charlie is my darling!"

Such were Mr. West's adventures during nearly six weeks of a time which he afterwards looked back to as one of the pleasant eras in his life. The clouds had broken; there was a tranquil sunlight over the sweetest flowers. The fair objects of daily life seemed to bask in this sunshine, and in his journeys and progresses. Sometimes through the long night he had no solitude, but a calm, tranquil happiness, an endless succession of pleasant pictures, an ineffable sense of looking forward, and a confidence for the delightful future that was approaching. He had by long practice during those solitary walks when he was in a different mood, trained his mind to an endless play, and it could entertain him, as he walked, with perpetual pictures. This that obedient servant will do, if it only gets practice. Thus he had always found himself good and interesting company. But the picture, thus inexhaustible in its variety of patterns, was one where was a gentle face of trusting affection in the centre—with the fluttering emotions of surprise, joy, delight, as he unfolded his news.

So at last, all being happily accomplished, he turned his face once more to the little French port, and set off for Brighton, then the favourite port for embarkation. There was the familiar churn-shaped Eagle, ready to plod her steady course across and back again—much what an old coach would be to our railway carriage. It was a fine cheerful day. There were pleasant families going across, about to stop for the night merely, among the détenus at the French port, going on in the morning to Paris,

and thence on the Grand Tour. There were gay daughters, to whom all was new, a "dear papa," delighted himself; their carriage and the courier were on board. These things Mr. West learned from the girls themselves, who were vastly entertained with the lively, good-natured Englishman who was crossing with them, and whom "dear papa" pronounced "as sensible a man as he ever met." For from that grave forehead had passed away all gloom and depression, and the sense of thought and hopelessness, and the look of "being ten years older" which he had so gratuitously taken on himself. The dull, unfashionable grey livery, quite in keeping, had given place to handsome and even fashionable garments. This was no bit of dandyism, but an almost unconsciousness of his old habit and old nature, which made him think that to be well dressed was to be a gentleman, almost as much as behaving with honour, truth, and profound courtesy, and the other virtues. They had "a charming passage," every one saying that the *Eagle* was really a fine boat, and complimenting the captain at dinner on commanding such an admirable craft. These compliments were indeed justly due to the forbearance of the weather, it being a true ladies' day, the *Eagle* being sure to behave in the most outrageous, imbecile, helpless way when there was anything like a heavy sea on. Now came the low-lying flats of the French coast, the theatrical *Phare* glittering in the sun, the two wickerwork piers all white drawing on. Now they were gliding by the great cross, and, turning the bend, the little town and port, the low gay houses, the crowded quays, the English, in full waiting for their prey, in ranks. Now Mr. West's heart began to flutter, and he looked out anxiously as they glided by. Then the ranks began to move, and walk along to keep up with the vessel. He saw the familiar figures, waiting, as usual, with an interest that no repetition could pall; Captain Filby with his stick; Mr. Blacker, with eager eye, prying at the crowd of passengers on the deck, as though he had been expecting a whole colony of friends, and here they were, come at last. He had indeed noted the substantial travelling-carriage, the courier, and the no less substantial family with whom his quick intelligence at once associated it. About them there could be "no mistake;" it was a good investment for attention. "I should be most happy to be of any service to you. I am the secretary to the English chapel here, &c." It was very strange to Mr. West thus returning to the settlement, and for the moment the look of the whole curiously depressed him. The very familiarity, instead of encouraging, made him melancholy. At last his eye suddenly lighted on his sister, cold, but stiff and anxious, looking and gazing wistfully at the deck.

All were now coming ashore, and in a moment he was beside her, and had her arm in his. The custom-house officers of the place knew their

own colonists very well, and were always indulgent to them about the formal searching. Mr. West was set free in a moment.

"Margaret, Margaret dearest, I am back with you again. And how have you been? And tell me about yourself. Everything here looks just the same."

And he looked round eagerly. There was a constraint and nervousness in her manner which he did not at first notice.

"Oh yes," she answered; "I have been so lonely without you, Gilbert. And now let us get home. You must be so tired; and we will have dinner at once."

"Tired! Not I, Margery," he said, gaily, still looking about. "I have travelled too much since to be tired. Oh, I have such adventures to tell you. And such plans, Margery. What do you think? I was down at the old place. Does that surprise you? Upon my word, this looks quite festive. Never thought it was such a gay pretty place before!"

"Do come home," she said, impatiently. "Surely you have seen all this over and over again. I want to hear everything. Do come!"

He looked at her with a little astonishment. "My dear Margery," he was beginning, when an impatient exclamation broke from her lips, and he felt her hand beat on his arm. He looked up, and there before him was the soft face that for all these weeks had been present to him, that had figured in all the little reverie dramas which had been playing before him morning and evening, and sometimes in dreams at night.

Dreams, indeed! Why did he not go forward to meet her, but stop thus irresolutely? She did not see him—was certainly not thinking of him at that moment, for her hand was on the arm of a tall handsome man, that looked some ten years younger than Mr. West. And her face was looking up at the handsome Spanish face—looking into the dark interesting eyes with an absorbed overpowering gaze. She was seeing, hearing, him alone. For a certain instinct, that tells us a whole history in one flash, there is neither time nor space; and in that one second Mr. West seemed to read a long story, with all its details, which the reader may have guessed long ago.

The surprise and then the shock overpowered him. Now she saw him. With a start and a rush of colour to her cheek she stopped also; then put out her hand, with "Ah! Mr. West! Returned to us!" He bowed, and said, "Yes; I have come." Two of the usual unmeaning speeches, for which neither was certainly accountable in such moments of doubt and agitation. The few sentences that followed may be imagined.

"We were expecting you so long. We were wondering what had become of you——"

He was still looking with the same surprise, and had not yet collected himself. Now Mr. Dacres had come up. There was a constraint in his manner.

"Hallo, West, come back at last! 'Pon

my word, we were wondering, I can tell you. We thought you had given us the slip, my dear friend. If you had not left Miss Margaret behind to answer inquiries, I don't know what odd stories would have been set afloat. What no earth have you been doing?"

Dacres repeated this question in a half-bantering, half-insolent manner, that on another occasion might have seemed to Mr. West a little offensive. He heard only the last words. He was now recovering, and answered mechanically:

"I had some business—some private business."

The young girl looked at him reproachfully, and then said suddenly:

"You know Colonel Vivian? Of course you heard of the wreck? No, you had gone away." And then she introduced them.

"Oh!" Dacres went on, "here's old Blacker flourishing up. See what he'll say. I wish you heard his private opinion. You may be sure the story lost nothing in *his* hands. And I tell you what I think you forgot to bring over with you, my dear boy," continued Mr. Dacres, in his most offensive familiarity—"that little article known to mankind as the tongue. Ha, ha!"

"I think we had better go home, Gilbert dear," said his sister, anxiously. "You must be tired—and there is the luggage."

"Yes," he said, abruptly, "I am tired. Let us go."

Brother and sister both turned away hurriedly.

"Was that Dacres?" said Mr. Blacker, pushing hurriedly by. He had secured possession of the new family.

Mr. West did not speak for a few moments. He then said, a little wildly:

"What is this? What does all this mean?"

"Oh, my poor Gilbert," said his sister, with quite a tone of agony in her voice, "you must prepare yourself for a trial; for they say *she is to be married to him.*"

HISTORY OF A SACK OF CORN.

SECOND CHAPTER.

THE tender shoots of the young wheat are beginning to appear through the half-frozen ground; and the long dismal eight months of a Russian winter are drawing to a fitful and boisterous close. Tall trees are blown down in scores by the tempestuous March winds; great floods are out; and wandering peasants or poor travellers get lost in quagmires, and never heard of more. The dull-eyed, stolid women of the hamlets on the steppe begin to come out of the smoky holes and caves in which they have passed the cold season between listlessness and drink. The snow upon the cabin roofs, which helped to keep out the winter storm, is beginning slowly to melt and trickle down on the kirpitch floor, to the surprise of the myriad tribes of insects and vermin

who have harboured there since last summer. The short sharp hailstorm pelts pitilessly upon ill-fed, feeble children, huddled in heaps near the stove, which serves for bed, kitchen, and comfort; and the partially melted hail-stones form in half-frozen pools in every hole about the hut. Drunken and brutalised boors are seen sleeping stupified in the streets, instead of hiding themselves in earth-holes and stables, to avoid being frozen to death;—then, with the first signs of approaching spring, my princely friend, Dooyoumalsky, perceives that there is another stroke of work to be done in his line of business. He has got advances upon his corn at Yassy and at Nicolaiev. He has sold it altogether, the whole crop, to Mr. John Anderson, a year ago, at Odessa. The prince smiles in a peculiar way as he looks at the name of the north-country gentleman, signed in a slow precise hand, on the formal and binding agreement which concluded this happy transaction.

Mr. John Anderson is a brisk confident young Scotchman, who went down from Constantinople especially to buy my prince's corn; and who has been thinking of his great bargain ever since. The brisk young Scotchman is so delighted with his splendid acquaintance, and the enormous profit he expects upon commercial dealings with him, that he has written to his correspondent, a cautious old uncle residing at Glasgow, to the effect that he has opened up a new trade which must enrich them in a few years; and that he naturally expects to obtain a partnership as the well-earned reward of his business-like intelligence. His mother has been gladdened with news even still sweeter, and has had her heart startled back into fresh life by the lavish promises which the Russian magnate has made to her son. The prince, her boy writes, has even gone so far as to hint that his highness has a princely relative of the female sex, who has seen the Scotchman coming up the staircase of the French hotel on the day he bought the corn; and the dounce laddie has been encouraged to believe it not wholly impossible that the new alliance between the respectable family of Anderson and the stately line of Dooyoumalsky may be some day cemented by warmer and closer ties than those of commerce. John does not say any more; he is too manly and modest. But it transpires many years afterwards, partly over an extra glass of toddy, and more immediately and fully from a story told with much humour by the prince, that a great deal more was said to him. Dooyoumalsky is still fond of relating, amidst shrieks of club laughter, that, having spent the fortune of an aunt of his, this mature princess determined to follow him day and night, and never to lose sight of him till she got some of it back again. He had been already set upon for six weeks by the resolute lady, when the stars decreed that he should meet with a protector.

"*Monsieur Andairson,*" the prince always declares with delightful good nature, "was one

yong mann of a candour and simplicity to be adored! Adored, I do assure you! It is rare to meet so a yong mann! Fresh, ardent, yet wise, oh so wise, he tell me ou to manage my lands, an oder wonderfool tings! Well, dis yong mann I tell my aunt to be one Scottish lord, and moch in loff with her; she see the yong mann on a stair, call him 'My lord,' and by-and-by she go to Stamboul after him. Figure to you then, I pray, what affair I have with that aunt and her four husbands at Bucharest when I go there, and she find out Monsieur Andairson agent for corn-broker! Pity me, I pray you;" and so on, as long as it is pleasant to talk or listen.

It is thus clear that there is no field at present open to a genius of the prince's calibre in the local Russian markets. But he is always too well informed for that to prove a difficulty; and at the critical moment one of the Cossack generals in command on the Danubian frontier who has been long looking out for an occasion of speculating with Dooyoumalsky, writes to him to say that a British bank has just been opened at Galatz for the purpose of making advances on grain; and also that an Irish gentleman from Belfast has been making inquiries which lead to the belief that he intends to establish a branch house at Ibraïla. He is a hopeful Irish gentleman, formerly a Crimean major of dragoons. He has a brother who is a thriving manufacturer at Belfast, and so he has sold out of a crack regiment to join him. The worthy fraternity have asked themselves whether some very cautiously conducted exchanges of Hibernian linen and Moldo-Wallachian corn might not be arranged in a manner advantageous to all parties. The major, who is a fine, genial, honest gentleman, by no means wanting in brains, has suggested this idea. Returning home from the siege of Sebastopol, he became enslaved by the charms of a boyard's widow, and has now hastened back to urge his suit and his fortunes together. So it appears that the Cossack general's information, allowing for a little exaggeration (no Russian could tell news without that), is substantially correct.

Before the bank has paid a single acceptance, before the Irish major has even thought of taking lodgings, Dooyoumalsky is with them. His diplomacy is perfect. No love-tricks with elderly aunts upon the square-toed, solid-looking banker. My prince has got his photograph, and knows that this little game would not do. The banker is too plump in the waist, too bald on the pate, and there is a stern keen look under those bushy eyebrows that warns my prince off that ground. Dooyoumalsky knows that the banker is not a man to be trifled with or tricked under ordinary circumstances, as well as if he had lived with him twenty years. My prince is aware that he is more difficult to be caught than the shyest trout in a Tyrolean brook; but he has caught trouts even there in his young days, and so sure as that banker's name is William Heavy-

side, my prince will catch and land him likewise. Indeed, Dooyoumalsky has long had an eye upon him. He was at the Isle of Wight last autumn just when it so happened that Mr. Heavyside was there also. He had come for his health after twenty years' prosperous trading among the wily Chinamen. My prince had frequently heard the wealth and integrity of the banker extolled by the happy islanders of Cowes and Shanklin. It was affirmed, moreover, that the merchants of Pekin had presented him with a farewell testimonial, and publicly expressed their regret that his health prevented him from remaining with them.

My prince carefully marked all this down for future use, and is heartily glad to see that Mr. Heavyside, tired of inactivity, has resolved to try the corn countries before he settles to repose and brings out his daughters as a county magistrate in England. Dooyoumalsky, indeed, finds it a very good speculation to appear from time to time in the British Islands. Our court journals, court circulars, and fashionable intelligence writers are so fond of talking about foreign princes, and calling them high-nesses all round indiscriminately, that my prince and many of his brethren find it a profitable advertisement to go to Britain. A week at a fashionable hotel, and a paragraph adroitly inserted in an evening paper, quite brush up a nobleman's tarnished reputation in Russia, and make it shine again. It has been known, over and over again, to transform an arrant cheat into an oppressed patriot of the loftiest dimensions; but, upon the whole, I am inclined to think that it succeeds oftenest and best as a pure trade venture. The British money market may be always wooed with success by a smart foreigner who is impudent, loud, and unscrupulous enough to court it properly.

For some days previous to the prince's arrival at Galatz, telegrams come pouring in from the uttermost ends of the earth. Dooyoumalsky is no common traveller, and he spends enough on telegrams in a month to keep him honestly for two, if he cared to live cleanly. Thus the banker, one day, going to dine at the hotel, because his own cook is drunk and absent, finds a magnificent apparition in the doorway. This is a Circassian chief, in the full uniform or costume of his country. He is a tall man, of remarkable grace and personal beauty. He looks, and he is, as brave as a lion. He is a perfect model of glorious health and strength in its most perfect development. His gay silken clothes blaze with silver; his gorgeous arms and his belt are encrusted with gems. There is quite a crowd round him, and several persons whom the banker has heard are warm men. Near him stands a fair-haired, blue-eyed young man, with delicately pencilled moustachios. He is evidently dressed by Mr. Poole in the height of fashion. His white beringed hands are full of unopened telegrams and letters with large official seals. About the inn-yard are several flushed and heated Tartar couriers who have just spurred in; and a sluggish

Cossack horseman sitting motionless with a long, tall, slender spear pointed upwards.

In answer to some inquiries, which it is not easy to get answered in the general excitement, the banker at last learns, from an apparently awe-stricken but communicative corn-broker's tout, who has just lounged in, and whom he has had occasion sometimes to employ, that the great Russian aide-de-camp-general, his Highness the Prince Vassili Ivanovitch Dooyoumalsky's coming has been telegraphed from St. Petersburg. The Hospodar has ordered the local authorities to receive him in state, and messages are arriving from various crowned heads every hour. That shaggy Cossack, with the spear, is waiting to convey immediate news of his highness's arrival to the head-quarters of the Russian army of observation now on the neighbouring frontier. The coming of this great man is supposed to have reference to recent political events in Austria and Hungary. So far the communicative broker's tout. His local name is "Courtier de Commerce," or Courtier of Trade. He buys nothing, he sells nothing himself; but he belongs to a very large class in Eastern Europe. He is a word-monger, and finds it a very good business.

As he still speaks, a wild yelling is heard in the distance, and a clump of straggling spears are seen just pointing above a neighbouring hillock. On they come, and after them a post-cart, with six horses at a headlong gallop, the postboys screaming like devils; and in rushes the prince's avant-courier. Amidst smoke, steam, mud, and hurry, this important personage jumps down from his straw perch, and announces the immediate coming of his highness. The local authorities flock hastily down, adjusting their sword-belts and uniforms; a military band forms before the hotel; troops line the street; and there they wait, hour after hour, till, towards dusk, the outriders of the main escort are signalled, and almost hidden by a cloud of spears, three tall travelling britzkas, with ten straggling ponies harnessed to each of them, are seen approaching rapidly. The first contains the prince's cook, the second his highness in person, and the third his secretary. The military band bursts into a deafening welcome as they roll into the inn-yard; and his highness, descending with the aid of two lackeys, makes his way into the chief room of the inn, where the town authorities and local magnates are assembled to receive him. He is in the splendid full uniform of a Russian general, covered with stars and crosses; it being the invariable custom for great men to travel in these countries so arrayed.

As the first screaming notes of the band strike up, the Cossack horseman lowers his spear. He raises his head stiffly, and the wiry little horse raises his tail in like manner, and away they go like a flash of lightning for the frontier, where they will bring the glad tidings that the first move in a new corn swindle is about to begin.

Late on the same night, just as the British

banker is thinking of bed, and when his confidential clerk, who has passed the evening with him, has gone home, he hears a soft continued knocking at his back door. Soon afterwards his principal servant comes in with a mysterious air. That servant is his chief butler, always a prominent personage, and the prime minister of every Oriental household. The banker has discovered quite a treasure of a chief butler in a Polish exiled count of the handiest character, who puts his nobility in his pocket quite out of the way, and is valet, housemaid, and often cook altogether, and always cheerfully. The banker, who does not know much of local market prices, thinks he was never better served in his life, and wonders how other people can complain of their domestic comforts in these easy-going places. Consequently, a very kindly and a pleasant feeling has sprung up in the Briton's heart towards his chief butler, and he means to lift up his head by-and-by, when time and occasion serve. The Polish nobleman seems to guess something of this, and with devoted attention and touching good taste, humbly conveys to him hints that he has found several times beyond price in his business. Upon the present occasion the Polish nobleman appears big with some tremendous idea. When mildly interrogated, he affirms that a poor but honest person of his acquaintance desires admittance on pressing business, of which he (the Polish nobleman) can only fancy the nature. He appears in an ecstasy of subdued joy as he makes that announcement. He has the generous and happy look of a man announcing good tidings of almost incredible fortune, in which he has no other concern than the rejoicing of a grateful heart over the coming pleasure of those it loves. Mr. Heavyside is infinitely softened, and bids him admit the poor but honest man at once. He does so, and it appears that he is the shabby talkative courtier of the inn-yard.

He has come to say that he has a marvellous bargain to propose. He has seen the prince's secretary, the fair young man whose hands were full of telegrams. Mr. Heavyside nods his remembrance of the secretary. Well, the poor but honest person has seen the secretary; that is, he watched for him till he had left the great man and was going to bed. It was impossible to get at him while with the prince, for the Circassian chief lies down on a carpet spread outside my prince's door, and would defend the entrance with his life. But the poor honest person has wits, and knowing that a great English banker (Mr. Heavyside winces) is established at Galatz, he saw that business might be done, and he has done it. He has ascertained that the prince has got sixty thousand acres of standing wheat in Bessarabia, just within a day's journey; and if a proper bribe is given to the secretary, perhaps the prince may be induced to sell it before any of the Greek or Italian dealers get at him. His highness is only going to stop a few hours, and his horses are ordered on to Bucharest at day-

break. Still something can be done: those Russians are such grand impetuous fellows; it is only needful to know how to manage them to do what you like. There is always some one near them who can turn them round one finger, and who will take a small bribe for a great service.

Perhaps Mr. Heavyside's English sense of right and wrong revolts at this idea of bribing a man's trusted servant to betray him. If so, he is requested to leave that part of the transaction to the poor but honest person. He need know nothing about it. Indeed, he is assured that as all Russians take bribes, and every employer is aware of the fact, they merely form a part of the legitimate and recognised perquisites of place. They are the commission elsewhere paid openly upon sales. The banker will find all these arguments perfectly familiar to his shabby visitor. Perhaps he still dislikes the whole affair, and feels doubtful about it, but he is ultimately put off his guard. The poor but honest person will cheerfully admit that the Moldo-Wallachian boyards are not to be trusted; but a Russian prince, a Dooyoumalsky, ah! The honest man clacks his thumb-nail against his teeth, to signify by that expressive pantomime how profound are his convictions as to the integrity and chivalrous nature of that lofty and immaculate class. The Polish nobleman here steps in. He has a national and deep hatred to all Russians. He contemptuously assures his master that Dooyoumalsky, when in command at Wilna, ordered the Polish nobleman's mother and seven lovely sisters to be all scourged to death; that nineteen other illustrious and lovely persons of his family were simultaneously shot, and their immense estates confiscated. Yet still this bloodthirsty miscreant is rich. The money he wrung out of tortured and prostrate Poland would make him rich; and, besides, there is the corn: they can go and see it. Mr. Heavyside has never been in the interior; suppose they go to-morrow. The Polish nobleman will make all the arrangements. A note to Mr. Ledger, the chief clerk, is all that will be necessary, and they may be back in three days. There is some excellent bustard-shooting on the road, and, perhaps, if they are fortunate, they may buy some valuable fox and wolf skins for winter pelisses. So here is a tempting health-giving sort of business started up full grown in the middle of a single night.

Perhaps the banker yields to these arguments. The proposed profits are enormous; no money will be wanted till the crops are shipped and insured. All this has been clearly explained to him. Beside, like most Englishmen, he has a spice of adventure and love of travel in him, or he would not be trying to gather nuggets on the banks of the Danube at his time of life.

Sure enough, then, the next day away they go, at daybreak, long before Mr. Ledger is stirring. There is no business that Mr. Ledger cannot do while his chief is away, and perhaps

it might be better for the business if his chief did not come back again, seeing that Mr. Ledger has grown grey in the country, and married a wife there, and that he knows already much of the grievous experience his employer will hereafter acquire. Little does Mr. Heavyside think, as he speeds pleasantly through the morning air, with four gay little ponies drawing a light calèche at twelve miles an hour over the steppe, how patiently he has been fished for, and how cleverly he has been caught. From time to time on the road he will meet shaggy, unkempt, loose-limbed peasant-boys on rough steppe galloways, without bridle or saddle, but always riding furiously. Those lads are messengers, going to and fro between the prince and his wife. She is a stout, inert, witless sort of lady, but she will be found quite prepared for Mr. Heavyside. Boys and ponies cost nothing in these countries, and she is sure to be well provided with instructions.

Mr. Ledger, as he walks down to his office, by-and-by, may also note the tall towering figure of the Circassian standing upon the house-top over his master's bedroom at the hotel. He is shading his eyes, naturally wonderfully clear and keen, with his hand, in order that he may see distinctly as far as possible. He is watching the road taken by the banker, and immediately the light calèche is quite out of sight, and he has observed that one of the pony messengers has got a wide start of it by a short cut through some woods on the right, he stalks down with a stately stride to report progress to my prince. That great boyard then pats the brave, sharp-eyed fellow on the head, like the faithful favourite sort of mastiff that he is; and my prince having flirted, according to his kind, with a travelling French actress staying at the hotel, smokes a few cigarettes with some local grandees who wait upon him, steps again into his smart travelling-carriage, and is off to have a little talk with the Irish major from Belfast, presently staying at Ibraïla.

AN OUT-OF-THE-WAY CORNER.

WHY I have taken it into my head to seek an Out-of-the-way Corner in the country for a temporary respite from London life, is, I fancy, nobody's particular business. It may have been to relax from burdensome duties, or to complete an epic poem, or to write a tragedy, or to solve a geometrical problem, or to perfect a piece of mechanism, or it may have been to do anything else; what is that to anybody? I sought retirement for a while, and found the prettiest, the most rural, and the quietest little nook in the beautiful county of Starshire, only a few miles from the metropolis, and not far from a branch railway station. Away from noise and hurry, here I have pitched my tent; in more business-like words, here I have hired a small cottage of three rooms. My landlord lives in an attached cot of two rooms, so curiously annexed by an

exceedingly skilful village architect that I think he would be likely to succeed in any great competition for public building; such, for example, as the Houses of Parliament, or the New Law Courts. He is a genius in his way. What his peculiar style is, it would be difficult to pronounce, though from the variety of his specimens I cannot help agreeing with the general opinion hereabout, that if he had been dead and buried in time, he and his architecture would have deserved an extra stanza in Gray's *Elegy*. But this his lot forbade.

Not e'en these bones from insult to protect,

Will frail memorial be erected nigh,

With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,

T' implore the passing tribute of a sigh.

He is what is called a character; and it is remarkable how many characters I have met with in this limited compass in a very short space of time.

To begin with my landlord. He was a butcher, and has withdrawn himself from the fatigues of the Borough-market on a limited competency. In person he is as square and stout as master-butchers ought to be; but his squareness in front is not now as rotundly firm as it used to be when he was in full occupation. His countenance is rather placid than expressive, and so meek, that one would swear he had never slaughtered any animal in all his life; though it is said he was brought up to the trade, and—when a mere child—was coaxed by his father to be a good boy, with the promise that if he were, he should have a lamb to kill by himself. But be that as it may, he is now a very mild and reputable man of somewhat over fifty years of age; and has one female servant to minister to his wants. They must have been rather driven into a corner by letting the roomier part of the small cottage to me. But Anne has since married the butcher, and taken the honoured and appropriate title of Mrs. Stillwell. Mr. Stillwell is a capital shot—a perfect Robin Hood for hitting anything he aims at. He has one friend and inseparable companion, who is his superior even in this accomplishment. His name is Mills. He is a little fellow. He has the sharp look of a ferret; and altogether, when scanned physiologically, suggests the idea of a weasel, or other thorough vermin, in human metamorphosis. In a locality of game-preserving, I should consider him competent for the most audacious risks and surest success. But there are no preserves near our corner, and the two friends simply stroll about to bag what comes across them in the sporting line, be it fish, bird, or quadruped. It could not be called poaching or trespassing, for Mills withal is a sober, peaceful, well-mannered fellow, and, when recounting his exploits, rather entertaining. There was no show of predetermined destruction of game, as at battues, for the two friends have only one ostensible gun between them, to take shot turn-about; but the butcher, besides a pouch like a wallet, has a long pocket, and in that pocket a long tube, and, when they walk

forth for an airing, that tube goes with them for an airing too. My belief was, and is, that, loaded with a pellet the size of a marrowfat pea, it never misses. The nose of a perch, the head of a dabchick, the leg of a rabbit, all one. The owners came one and all into the pot pourri; and the friends frequently make very savoury refectations, recalling to mind a chef-d'œuvre of Ude, Soyer, or Francatelli. Not to tell that there is occasionally a hare in the stew, or a leveret, or a wild duck in winter, or a few pigeons (wild of course), and that once a covey of thirteen partridges having been surreptitiously hatched in a gentleman's garden about a mile off, the birds were so abandoned that they would stray out of their proper bounds, and provoke Mills to bring a brace home, "accidentally," until not one was left. They are open to snipes, fieldfares, and plovers likewise, and I have heard of an owl; but Mills assures me flatly that he shot it on commission, for stuffing as a specimen.

Until I came here, I had lived all my days in town. In chambers I only knew the names of my neighbours from their being painted on the board of the other in-dwellers on my staircase. In the street where I sojourned a long time I was not aware who were my next-door respectable ratepayers; and, on the opposite side, the extent of my intelligence related to several young ladies who read diligently at the windows, and sometimes looked off their books. But I knew nothing, and cared nothing, about any one being among the whole miscellaneous lot. How or why I have come to take so much interest in my new rustic associates, as to know all about them, I can scarcely say, unless it is that we all watch one another.

The Dark-mouth Arms is the inn of the hamlet. The Dark-mouth Arms, so grandly named after a noble earl who is lord of the surrounding manor, and illustrated by a heraldic signboard flamingly blazoned, is also a beer-shop, and the tenancy is held by one Job Crawley, a remarkably strong-built and athletic man, somewhat over the middle age. Job was once what we used to style a bruiser, but what is called, in later and more refined language, a pugilist, or prize-fighter. He, Pilgrim-of-Progress-like, fought many a good fight, until he became tempted to withdraw from the ring which he adorned, to put another ring on the fat finger of the landlady of "the Dark-mouth."

Sure such a pair were never seen

So justly formed to pair by nature;

for, potential as Job looks, he cannot compete with his wife, who is the largest lady of colour I ever saw, and yet I once had the honour of an interview, for which I paid half-a-crown, with the Hottentot Venus. She has a face broad and round as the moon (eclipsed, to be sure), but illuminated with such splendour of white teeth as the proudest duchess in the land might envy, or as the greatest living dentist might try to emulate in vain. She

is handsome, of pleasing expression, and a model of perfect cleanliness in household and person. A friend of mine, who derives the name of the Dark-mouth Arms from the landlady, considers Job fortunate in his transition from the black eyes of the old ring to the black eyes of the new. Job is mild-tempered, and, when not offended or drunk, keeps the peace like a constable off duty, or a policeman in a gentleman's kitchen. Mrs. Crawley being of a similar disposition, under similar conditions, but not otherwise, it cannot be asserted that their matrimonial felicity is unruffled. On the contrary, violent storms occur, and Job will occasionally be provoked to knock his darling down; and she to lay his head open by the adroitly directed fling of a quart pot or decanter. Yet they really love one another after their fashion. Let any one lay a rude touch on either, in presence of the other, and try!

The next cottage to me is a like small domicile, with a like small garden (perhaps thirty paces by fifteen), the occupant of which was seldom visible when I came into the Out-of-the-way Corner. During the year, he came down, now and then, to look at something in some neatish sheds or out-houses, and to sleep, and go away. I was informed by Mr. Stillwell, when I hired my cottage, that his name was Codling, and that he was officially and respectably connected with the Corporation of London. This was true, but yet Mr. Codling was a mysterious personage until the spring season commenced and brought him out. Then there was bustle and preparation in the Codling halls. A handsome tent was erected in the garden, and ranges of symmetrical steps or benches were laid down, and speedily covered with flower-pots of many a varying size. I now discovered that my neighbour was a tulip-fancier, and that in that pretty piece of ground (not as spacious as a moderate, middle-class drawing-room) he was bringing to perfection the annual result of his competitive skill and unwearied attention. The canvas was shifted up and down, according to the weather, and I laughed at the glimpses I got of the budding flowers, and the extraordinarily minute pains bestowed upon them. We, on our side of Mr. Codling, were courteously requested not to burn any weeds; and Messrs. Stillwell and Mills were entreated not to smoke a pipe, nor I a cigar, when the wind blew south-east, south, south-west, or west: because the deteriorating odour would be wafted to the tulips, and it would be injurious to them to close the tent in that direction. In due time I was invited to the annual show, and met a large party, including amateur florists from several parts of the Continent. Mr. Codling gave a City-like lunch, and pointed out to me the first prize, for which he had received three hundred guineas from one of his guests. I acknowledged it to be very pretty, but thought some specimen as low as ten or five guineas quite as beautiful. The company looked upon me with sovereign con-

tempt, and I took an early opportunity to steal away.

Steal away; all very well to say so; but we are situated on the heaviest and stiffest loam in England, and rapid locomotion is often an extreme difficulty with us. The doctor prescribed daily walking exercise to an invalid neighbour, and though he stuck to it, he withered and died in two of the sweet, moist spring months, on the soil so favourable to tulips.

Mr. MacTweedy is a gardener living on the top of the gently sloping hill, with a small extent of ground, and two or three insignificant glass houses. But these same glass houses are a fortune, maintaining him in respectable competency; he is always to be found, with his staff of two or three, labouring to a nicety in the cultivation of his produce. Strawberries, so premature as to sell for a guinea the thumb-pottle in Covent-garden market (about a shilling and ninepence per strawberry), are the foremost and first-fruits of his skill, and they are followed by other delicacies, so much out of season as to bring very high prices. Adjacent is Thomson, another and more general gardener, with larger premises: of whom all I know is, that, when going to leave the Out-of-the-way Corner for a few weeks, I asked him to keep my half-dozen fancy fowls, and he did. They strayed; but Mills told me he had never seen a Dorking anywhere about.

I am afraid I must confess to a sneaking friendship for Mills. Certainly I cannot rate him as a sportsman of the highest order, though I am sure that, if he had possessed the means to rent a manor in the Highlands of Scotland, his deeds would have put to shame those *pro tempore* autocrats whose purses carry further and better than their guns. I was acquainted with one of these, who never sent me a feather, but who told me he had shot three seasons (he never shot anything else), and that a ptarmigan was a species of cock-of-the-wood or turkey. Besides, Mr. Mills is always in the way: not in the sense of obstruction, but of usefulness and helping hand. In all his dealings with his fellow-creatures, too, he is as honest as he is obliging; and, to see him glorified under the grand shining dark disc of Mrs. Crawley at the Dark-mouth Arms, when he has deserved her countenance, is a spectacle not to be effaced from the mind of the picturesque-loving beholder. But he has other qualities or accomplishments of which it behoves me to speak. He has improved his vocal organs beyond belief. There is not a bird in the air, or a beast on the earth, or, I had almost said a fish in the water (dumb as they are asserted to be), or an insect, anywhere, whose voice he cannot imitate to perfection. As a hen gathers her chickens, so can Mills, at eve, call a covey to his feet. He can chirp birds from the trees, and bring hares (not rabbits) to stop and listen. One sunny evening, on a sunny hedgerow bank, he asked me if I would like to look at a weasel? On my answering in the affirmative, he uttered a curious

noise, upon which the animal peeped out of a hole, and, in half a moment, the air-gun brought down the quarry.

A WORKHOUSE PROBE.

A COAL-CELLAR without coals; a punishment-cell for refractory criminals; a dreary black-hole, with grated windows, and cold damp floor and walls; a tank with the water let off, and the oldest fish-inhabitant departed—such is the Hampshire casual ward we are visiting to-day. It is very small. Its sole furniture is one bedstead, without clothes or wraps; and, though we are assured that a fire is lighted in it “sometimes,” there is no evidence of any such genial contingency now. Its massive door is plentifully studded with the heavy iron nails which adorn the entrances to her Majesty’s jails, and are supposed to strike terror into the hearts of evil-doers; and it is altogether as cold, comfortless, and penal a resting-place as the sternest disciplinarian could wish. If it does not do duty as village lock-up, the local authorities are extravagant; for a fitter place in which any ostreperously convivial Giles or Roger might shake off the hilarity of a Saturday night’s carouse, and might become penitent, meek, and subdued, it would be hard to find. You step down into it direct from the road without intervening hall or corridor, and the approach to its one door is graced by a stagnant pool, the fetid smell from which offends the least sensitive nose. “We’re not much troubled with tramps here, gentlemen; they prefer going on to the town, four miles off,” remarks the matron, with a smile. As we look down shudderingly, this wet and foggy autumn day, into the damp dark place, and fancy the key turned and ourselves locked in till morning, we fully appreciate the preference shown. Any sensible wayfarer, however footsore, hungry, and exhausted, would struggle on for another four miles to avoid spending the night in a dungeon, compared to which a police-cell is comfort, and a model prison luxury.

“No admittance to the workhouse, except on business, by order of the guardians,” does not apply to us. Our open sesame is the inquiry we have on hand; for “we” are the Lancet Commission, which your servant, the present writer, has been permitted to accompany on its errand of humanity, and admission is cheerfully accorded, apparently by instinct, certainly without a question as to our credentials. A snug, cozy little union of four parishes, managed by a board, the chairman of which is the squire of the neighbourhood, with for a vice-chairman the squire’s namesake and near relative; a union in which the workhouse is rented by the board of managers from the presiding member of that board (!)—a union where the clergyman of the parish is paid an annual sum, not for holding regular service as chaplain, but for occasionally visiting the twenty-one paupers now in the house; a little place where “wards” are cottage-rooms, and where the master and matron

are collectively chief nurse, governor, superintendent, labour-master, mistress, and head-cook. Matters which would be abuses on a large scale are part of a system here, under which paupers are, perhaps, better cared for than in many an establishment whose pretensions are fourfold.

The “workhouse” consists of twelve little cottages, forming an enclosed quadrangle, in which there is practically no classification, and where some of the sanitary arrangements are as bad as ignorance and old-fashioned prejudice can make them. A cesspool which has “not been cleared out in the twelve years we’ve been here,” lies under the windows of the lying-in and infectious wards; and the closets, which have been “inspected” twice a year, with great regularity, by the representative of the Poor Law Board, are as disgustingly unfit for human use as if they belonged to some savage kraal, where the commonest laws of decency and health were unknown. But in many of the inner domestic details in which kind and thoughtful interest makes people happy, the twenty-one men and women were well placed. You see it in the bright alacrity of the matron, in the cheerful readiness of her replies, in the snugness of some of the internal arrangements, and in the cleanliness and contentment of the small handful of paupers at home. The entrance to the master’s house—which is simply one of the cottages furnished up and snugly furnished—is opposite the door of the dungeon in which tramps pay the penalty of their calling. The master is at church, but his wife will show us over the workhouse with the greatest pleasure. There is no pause, nor evasion, nor holding back; and, in two minutes from the time of our ringing the bell, we have passed through the private apartments, and are on the female side of the central yard. Such a little place to be a union workhouse! After a long experience of workhouses like towns, of long and dreary chambers in which a short-sighted person could easily mistake his own father if placed at the opposite end to himself, Mr. Wemmick’s Walworth fortress, with its Lilliputian drawbridge, moat, and guarded postern, irresistibly occur to us as we are shown over “wards” not much larger than bathing-machines, and “refectories” and “day-rooms” which would be undersized for a family of six. There is no communication through what we suppose we must call the house. The cottages are—save here and there, where two bed-rooms have been thrown into one—almost as distinct as in the pre-New Poor Law period when they were built. Hearing with pleasure that the child-inmates are sent to the ordinary parish school, and not educated like pariahs apart, we pass into the first cottage on the women’s side.

A little room, with what seemed to be the car of a balloon in wicker-work standing in one corner, and one small tin basin—of the size of the vessels in which “half portions” of soup are served at a club—filled with soapsuds, is shown us as the lavatory. On remarking that the latter article looked, if anything, a trifle small to be

the washing vessel of the establishment, we were told of increased accommodation looming in the future; and that upon a board or sub-committee making up its mind and presenting a report, a larger basin and a more copious supply of towels would be granted. The balloon-car turns out to be a cradle, unoccupied at present, but in which four pauper babies can be rocked at once, two at each end—a comprehensive provision if the total population of the workhouse, twenty-one, all decrepit or disabled, be considered. Two women, one weak-minded and the other subject to fits, a child, and a bedridden old man, are the only inmates at home. The other paupers—including a couple of idiots and a young man of suicidal tendencies—are with the master at church, for a great anniversary festival is being held, and the little knot of male worshippers, in clean white smock-frocks, seated to the right of the middle aisle, and the handful of poor women opposite them, are the workhouse's contribution to the celebration of the day. The child smiles upon us, and gazes up wonderingly, with grave black eyes, in which, by the way, there is not a trace of fear, as the matron precedes us into the room. It is another cottage apartment, with the two women just spoken of busily at work. They are all scrupulously clean, despite the size of the tin cup just hinted at; and here, as elsewhere, during our visit, we are disposed to declare the little place to be exceptional, and not to be judged by the rules it is essential to enforce in other establishments of its class. That it should, in spite of some grave defects, rise superior to circumstances, is doubtless due to the character and disposition of its governing board and their two delegates, the master and matron. The latter is as cheery and kind as a warm heart and good disposition could make her. The pauper child's smile of recognition and welcome, and the way her little hand closed familiarly upon our guide's gown, spoke volumes as to habitual kindness; while the demeanour of the two women—familiar and confident, though not wanting in respect—was a testimonial infinitely more convincing than a whole wilderness of votes of thanks and minutes of approval. After a question from one of the women on a point of household discipline has been answered, and the little girl's whispered petition smilingly granted, we pass to the kitchen, where boiled bacon, cabbages, and some added condiment, giving a deliciously appetising flavour, are swimming in the coppers we are invited to peer into. A most savoury and toothsome mixture it seems to be, and our railway journey from London, and moist drive subsequently from Barchester, has left us hungry enough to envy the paupers for whom it is preparing.

More cottage apartments, the down-stair rooms, with flooring of stone or brick; those up-stairs holding three or four beds, all well appointed, and each cottage containing two rooms. Chairs or benches, a rough table, and

a cupboard used in common by the occupants, comprise the furniture. After traversing the yard, and going over every room of every cottage—finding, of course, a wonderful uniformity throughout—we come to the one bedridden old man. A room has been fitted up for him on the ground floor, and here he is lying cozily enough, but quite alone, with his feet to the door, and his limbs and body stretched out in an attitude which suggests rather painfully the time when lameness, and old age, and poverty will be over, and when he will be carried from his present resting-place for ever. Not that there was anything in the man himself, as distinguished from his attitude, to suggest aught but the keenest appreciation of life; for he started up in bed and bobbed his head to the Commission, as if he guessed the purport of the visit, and had been waiting these thirteen years to speak his autobiography. He was a hale, ruddy, vigorous old fellow, who had lost an eye, but whose voice showed no sign of infirmity. Nay, as we had understood before we visited him that he was very deaf, this vigour of voice led to a rather boisterous colloquy between one of our party and himself. "How do you find yourself, my man?" inquired our friend, in tones adapted to a patient whose infirmity aural surgeons had failed to relieve. "Noicely, thankee, zur, but oise lame, yon know, oise lame!" shouted back the invalid, in accents fitted for the quarter-deck of a battle-ship in the heat of action; and so the conversation went on, each sorry for the other's deafness, and politely anxious to accommodate himself to it. For the old pauper was not satisfied with emulating the bellow of an exceptionally strong-lunged bull. He made a speaking-trumpet of his wrinkled hands; and, taking steady aim at his visitor's ear, repeated every assertion twice. "Yes, oi'm well enough;" then more slowly, "Oi'm well enough" (pause), "bar the lameness—bar the lameness." He had been at full pitch for some minutes now, and though red in the face could still have cleared the busiest thoroughfare for a fire-engine's progress. "It was Mr. Mullings's horse, it was, yes. It was Mr. Mullings's horse. Kicked me he did! He kicked me, yer knaw" (louder). "Oi can stand up though" (louder still); "oi can stand up." Then, not quite so loud, but with a slow distinctness of enunciation, meant to give his hearer every chance, "Oi can stand up, but it's walking that bothers me, that bothers me, just here, yer knaw; just here. Oi'm well enough, and comfortable enough, thankee, zur. Now I don't want for nothing, I dawns't, thankee kindly." A shelf half hidden by a neat curtain held a couple of bottles and a Bible and prayer-book, and a convenient stand at the bed-head served for the veteran's dinner-tray. "I suppose he's very deaf," said his late interlocutor, commiseratingly, as we left him bobbing his head like some huge and bulbous sensitive plant, after his bed-linen and accessories had been examined, and found clean: "I suppose he's very deaf. How old is he?"

"Well, sir, he's eighty-five, and his sight's failing, but his hearing's as good as ever!" This discovery rather weakened the spirit of our cross-examination; but time pressed, and we passed to what was called the old men's day-room. The pseudo deaf man, who, though confined to his bed, looked as hale and strong as any of us, had been a soldier, then a wanderer, then a farm-labourer, but "had never made himself a home," and was locally known as a boisterous Lothario up to the time of his accident "a long time ago, I don't exactly know how long, but he was here when we came in 1855."

A corner cupboard containing an odd volume of a religious work, a soap-dish and shaving-brush, three stale crusts, two small bits of cooked meat, and some odd cups and saucers; a table, a bench, and a Windsor chair with unnaturally long legs, which lifted it from the ground like stilts, and a cottage interior to match the rest, made up the old men's day-room. A pauper, recently deceased, had laboured under a spinal infirmity which compelled him to sit in a certain position, and the chair had been altered by order of the guardians for his benefit. The other inmates, both male and female, are too old and infirm for household work, so a charwoman, and in time of pressure two charwomen, are hired from the village for as many days a week as are necessary to keep the place in order. Everything is on the same cozy scale. The "infectious ward"—it really seems absurd to use these titles when we recal the little place—is the upper room of one of the cottages. It is seldom used. How often? "Oh! perhaps twice or three times a year, perhaps not so much—we had a case of itch here last, but that's five months ago. No, we've never any able-bodied people here, and the others are nearly all of the same class as the old man you've been talking to, who have never made themselves a home. Our guardians relieve out more than in; for if they can help people at their own places, they prefer doing it to breaking up their homes and forcing them into the house. Do I consider it safe to keep two idiots and a young man of suicidal tendencies together, with their medicine bottles within reach to drink from, or ply each other with? Well, it's some months ago since the young man attempted his life last, and he's been a good deal easier in his mind lately. Indeed, sir, if you think the Commissioners of Lunacy ought to know about him, and that he shouldn't be kept here, I'm sure I'll tell the board so, and I dare say they'll have him moved. No, sir, I don't remember that the gentleman from the Poor Law Board ever mentioned this; but you shall see the visiting book directly. May I ask if you're from the *Lancet*, gentlemen? Yes! I thought as much (smiling). Well, I hope you don't find us very bad. I'm sure we try our best, and when there's any one sick I don't think they're badly cared for. I generally nurse myself, and the ladies from the Hall and the clergyman's wife

often come to read to the inmates, and lend them books as well; oh yes, the clergyman visits the workhouse regularly. No, sir, there's no service held here, but the ten pounds a year is paid him for coming, don't you see, and he's very good and kind, I'm sure."

Although we had reason to believe that paupers—always excepting the male casuals, who were evidently housed wretchedly on principle—were properly treated in the main, the arrangement under which the workhouse is hired struck us as peculiar. One regulation of the new Poor Law is, that "all contracts to be entered into on behalf of the Union, relating to the maintenance, clothing, lodging, employment, or relief of the poor . . . shall be made and entered into by the guardians;" and, in a note to this clause, we find that "heavy penalties are imposed on persons having the management of the poor"—i.e. the guardians—"if concerned in contracts for the supply of goods,"—"goods," in this sense, obviously referring to lodging as well as maintenance, "for the use of such poor."

This salutary regulation is, it is well known, frequently evaded. The influential ratepayer, who virtually returns a section of the guardians, is a tradesman whose tenders are not often refused; guardians have nephews, or brothers, or wife's relatives, who sell bread, or groceries, or meat, on such disinterested terms, that it is the bounden duty of the parochial board to deal with them; or guardians sell the raw material out of which the goods for contracts are made, and make their vote contingent upon the tradesman buying of them in return. These things are notorious; and the following anecdote fairly illustrates the system. Not many months ago, a contract for painting a metropolitan workhouse was signed; and, in due course, the painter entered upon his work. On the first day a guardian, who is a wholesale dealer in colours, looked in at the workhouse during the dinner-hour, and while the workmen were away, and in his intense regard for the paupers' comfort, asked to see the wards then being restored, that he might judge for himself how the work was performed. The good man then, without passing a word of censure or comment, wrapped up two minute specimens of the paint, put them in his waistcoat-pocket, and walked quietly away, first telling the workhouse-master to let the contractor know of his visit. The next day this guardian and colour-dealer received in answer to his hint an order for the very paints required to carry out the workhouse contract; so that all unpleasant analyses of the quality, or quibbles as to the work, were promptly avoided. Here was no corruption, no touting, no undue influence. What could be more strictly in accordance with a high-minded guardian's sense of duty than that he should devote his special knowledge to the ensuring fit materials for parish work being used? And how could this end be better attained than by examining them for himself? On the other hand, the contractor was merely

anxious to please his customers; and if one of them furnished the paints himself, it was scarcely likely that the board would be dissatisfied; or questions arise as to an inferior description being used, or less work being given; or on the contract generally being performed in a slovenly but inexpensive fashion. The tacit understanding manifested between guardian and contractor was beautifully simple, and in large towns, where parochial boards are mainly composed of small tradesmen, there is no reasonable doubt that similar practices prevail almost universally. But in the agricultural districts, where country gentlemen, magistrates, and their friends serve as guardians, where a patriarchal interest is supposed to be felt in the poor people of the township, or the estate, we expect matters to be managed without taint of jobbery. Yet, in the establishment we are visiting, where we find so much to praise and so comparatively little to blame, the chief guardian lets the workhouse to the rest, and draws his rent from the poor-rates he administers!

It is possible that no very serious wrong ensues. It is possible that the ratepayers are better served than if a workhouse were built in another portion of the parish; and it is probable that the paupers are more kindly treated, when the squire of the parish serves in the double capacity of landlord and chief guardian. But that the practice is loosely illegal, and open to grave abuse, there cannot be a doubt. Suppose a man to be less high-minded than there is reason to believe this present chairman to be. Suppose other guardians coalesced to purchase, build, and let to each other for the use of the poor. Suppose land to be owned by one guardian, bricks made by another, building undertaken by a third, and so on—what check have we then? The answer is, the Poor Law Board, which, through its representative, the district inspector, undertakes to see that the law is properly observed. Let us turn, then, to the visiting-book, and see how the official visitor, who is already celebrated for his discharge of duty at Farnham, has performed this duty. His inspections have been made with great regularity twice a year, and "Wards in good order," "Satisfactory," "Very satisfactory," form the staple of his monotonous remarks. Not a syllable concerning sanitary arrangements, closets, cesspools, classification, or the ownership of the house. Not a grumble, scarcely a suggestion. That some vegetables should be moved from one empty room to another, is positively the most important recommendation made for years. Another entry, in which some minor alterations are suggested, has under it, as the guardians' minute thereupon, "refer to the landlord, and request him to make the changes advised." That is, refer to our chief, and see whether he will put his hand in his pocket, as owner, to satisfy a request officially made by himself as guardian. Comment is needless upon a system of control which makes this state of things possible, and we left the

workhouse honestly wondering that its abuses are so few.

Then came the question, argued earnestly and anxiously on our way home—How are securities to be made stronger, and laxity and cruelty less frequent? Our answer was—Publicity. Our workhouses must no longer be close boroughs, jobbed and managed, or mismanaged, by a clique or coterie. Inspection must be in the hands of the ratepayers, as well as of an official who lives in the county, who is on terms of friendly intimacy with the guardians, and who, having reported for the last thirty years that everything is in capital order, cannot well eat his own words, and stigmatise wards and infirmaries as imperfect now. At present, a painstaking inspector is to be pitied, for he has no reward but unpopularity and a conviction that in the most careful of his investigations he is beating the air. He reports unfavourably to the Poor Law Board, and a letter is sent from Whitehall to the country guardians, advising that the recommendations made by their officer be carried out. The guardians—we are quoting no imaginary case, but one which is constantly occurring—either order the official communication to "lie on the table," or argue the point with their Whitehall censors, showing how, with all due respect for the inspector in a general way, they cannot but feel that in this particular instance he is utterly wrong, and they must therefore decline to incur the expenditure advised. Then comes a pause. Meanwhile the months roll on, and the inspector visits the workhouse again, sees the same abuses, reports as before, and another official letter is sent to the guardians. This is either unanswered, or again answered as we have said. What happens then? Is the department irritated, or stimulated into action, or hurt at its own powerlessness? Not a bit of it. "*Put by*" is written on the papers relating to what is called "that troublesome case," and the matter drops into oblivion, the inspector becoming known as a man giving needless trouble. It may be a foul drain, killing off its tens or hundreds every year; a mode of dispensing medicines which ensures fatal accidents from blundering; or a defect in an infirmary ward which is slowly torturing the helpless into their graves. No matter. The Poor Law Board "has the honour to be," and, having acknowledged a report and made a request, comfortably washes its hands of the business, and feels it has done its duty. "The Poor Law Board," said a chairman of a board of guardians in conversation the other day, "appeal to the Poor Law Board! strengthen the Poor Law Board! Why, it's the greatest sham and obstructive of us all. Guardians are bad enough, and stupid enough, and sometimes corrupt enough; but for downright causing of evil, the government 'safeguard' is the worst of all. We've never applied to it for advice in a difficulty, and had a satisfactory answer. Many a time have the obstructives at our board—the fellows who've but one notion of a pauper, something to starve, or put down, or get rid of

—many a time have these used the Poor Law Board as an instrument against those anxious for humanity to the poor. Besides, if all I hear be true, the Board itself is as mythical as its influence for good. Keep quiet, avoid disturbance, and consequent unpopularity. Don't rouse people against us and make a renewal of the bill under which we claim our comfortable salaries impossible — those have been the outspoken tenets of 'the Board.' " "Is it possible," we asked, "that successive Home Secretaries, the Presidents of the Council, and their colleagues in the Cabinet, can have been so mean-spirited and base?" "Not at all. But these high functionaries are only the sham board. The Poor Law Board potential is made up of the secretary and one or two colleagues. These are the men upon whom the responsibility of past and present policy rests. The parliamentary secretaries and the president are helplessly in their hands; and it is notorious in which direction the strings have been pulled. Let us have a succinct statement of what these paid advisers have done for the poor or for the country in the years during which they have drawn the public money; and let us hear why the secretariat complained of by one Poor Law President, Mr. Matthew Baines, as 'too large,' has been considerably increased since his time."

If it be true that the secretary of this precious department is its real chief, let us have the fact made known to parliament and to the country, and responsibility properly awarded. There is neither merit nor justice in making a particular workhouse or a particular official the scapegoat of the rest—unless it be in the hope of reforming all. The rank abuses which are inseparable from the system must be traced to their source, and a righteous control established, to which both careless or corrupt guardians and supine officials must bend. Purgings Whitehall may prove to be the only mode of securing wholesome workhouses, and healthily active boards.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

EARTHQUAKES.

WE move upon the surface of the globe, as a humorist who was also a philosopher once observed, knowing no more of its central contents than flies do of what is inside a Woolwich shell over which they crawl. There is fire, we know, because Vesuvius, Stromboli, and other volcanoes, are so many furnace-doors, occasionally open, through which we see the gushes of flame. There is an explosive and destructive power, too, offspring of those terrible passions into which that great dumb monster, the earth, sometimes breaks, to the horror and destruction of poor fragile humanity—offspring to which we give the dreaded name of earthquakes.

A certain fantastic old thinker about the cosmogony, who considered the earth to be a huge living animal, bristled with forests, encrusted with mountains, and speckled with oceans and lakes, would no doubt have really believed our

metaphor to be a solid fact. He would have affirmed that earthquakes were really the shudderings of a vast megalosaurus, as he blunderingly laboured to rise from his long trance. There have been, as we know, great astronomers who have asserted the sun to be a world on fire, a glowing, vast, red-hot asbestos, coal in the heavens, at once a beacon, a furnace, a fireplace, and a huge central aerial chandelier to the system it focuses. Other stargazers have assured us that the moon is a burnt-out world—a great cinder of lakes and mountains, now nearly all named and surveyed, and lit only by reflexion from our planet. Men signally wise in extracting sunbeams from cucumbers, and in trying to gauge the infinite with a pint cup, have assured audiences that perpetual motion was possible, because our earth is an example of the great opprobrium of science being solved—the sea being a moving weight that perpetually overbalances the wheel of the world, and keeps it spinning on in space.

But, alas! poor humanity has its limitation. The eye of the finite being can only look a mile or two into the darkness of the earth's surface; no cable, no lead-line of the wisest science, has ever yet drawn up anything but silence and darkness from the central caves of that probably explosive shell—the earth we live in. Earthquakes come, and earthquakes go, and puzzle us for ever. The destructive influence of hurricanes and earthquakes is at present as inscrutable to science as that endless problem of theologians, the origin of evil. "Men," says Richter, "rear pyramids, and try to build for eternal duration; but the great Shaper of the world seems to have inserted into our globe's ingredients the elements of its future destruction. The world is, in fact, a live shell, with a time-match in it, which is burning slowly in its socket."

Among the greatest earthquakes of modern times, that at Lima, on the 28th of October, 1746, stands pre-eminent, as it also extended to Callao, and eighteen thousand persons perished among the ruins. This convulsion, which spread along the coast one hundred leagues to the north and one hundred to the south, began about half-past ten at night. The noise, the shock, and the ruin took place in the space of only four minutes. The day being one dedicated to St. Simon and St. Jude, the people of Lima attributed to the agency of those saints the fact that only eighteen thousand persons perished out of a population of fifty thousand. Vast quantities of gold, silver, and jewels were buried among the seventy-four churches and the fourteen monasteries. A great many nuns perished, and seventy sick persons were killed in one hospital alone. The public fountains were buried, the statues of the Spanish kings crushed, and the streets barricaded with fallen houses. As for Callao, it was utterly destroyed, and even its very shape changed by huge heaps of sand and gravel. At the moment of the earthquake, the sea rose mountains high, and rolled on till it buried the city, and destroyed every-

thing, except the two great gates. Of the five thousand inhabitants, only about two hundred escaped by clinging to timbers and pieces of wreck. The vessels at anchor off Callao either foundered at their moorings, or were washed beyond the city with an irresistible violence. During the lull of the earthquake, there could be heard no sound but the screams, cries, and groans of the drowning, and the prayers and exhortations of the brave Franciscan monks, who, till the waters choked them, continued their prayers and hymns. Great vaults, piled with corn, tallow, jars of wine, timber, iron, tin, and copper, were all destroyed. The destruction of Callao caused fresh terror to Lima. There, at daybreak, the brave viceroy, the Marquis of Villa Garcia, appeared on horseback in the streets, and issued orders for the repair of the aqueducts, and for procuring corn from the outlying provinces.

The Spanish governor of Lima also ordered the dead bodies to be collected in the churches, and to be as rapidly interred as possible, and instantly erected gibbets in the public places for the swift execution of thieves.

But the most tremendous earthquake of modern times was, however, that of Lisbon, in 1755. Those who know the Lisbon of the present day, throned on its three hills and mirrored in the Tagus, its noble amphitheatre of towers and palaces standing out against a background of olive woods and vineyards, will remember how calm and stately it rises from the river-side, almost equal to Stamboul itself in its royal beauty. Its palaces, faced with tiles of blue and green porcelain, give the city a quaint and somewhat Chinese character, while in the principal streets huge masses of orange and pomegranate blossom trail down the garden walls, and hang from the terraces of huge structures, once convents. It is pleasant to walk in that vast Black Horse Square, as our seamen call the Prada de Commercio, in the centre of which stands a fine colossal Commendatore sort of statue of Joseph the First on horseback. Three streets lead from this to even a larger square. Very beautiful and very dirty is the Lisbon we know, in our time.

On the 1st of November, 1755, the people of Lisbon had risen as usual, and looked out upon Belem and the Tagus, the little villas among the olive-groves, the orange-trees, the bull-ring, the hospitals, the convents, and the shops. In the seventy-five convents and forty churches of Lisbon the bells had tinkled, and the early prayer been said. The clear blue air roofed the city; the birds were singing their matins in the suburb gardens of Alcantara and Campo Grande. There was no omen of evil; it was a hopeful day, and the river lay, for mile after mile, calm in the early sunlight.

Suddenly there came a convulsive tremor through the city, and it fell to pieces like a children's tower of cards. It was a great festival that morning; the churches were full of kneeling crowds, and starry with wax-candles, and luminous with lamps. In a moment, roofs crashed in, towers fell, arcades gaped in two,

palaces tottered, steeples snapped, walls were sundered. The air grew black with rising clouds of dust, and was filled with the crash of ceaseless destruction, and the groans and screams of the stricken and the dying. At the same time, as if the terrors of the Apocalypse had broken at last on Lisbon, the sea, agitated to its depths by the horrible convulsion, rose and spread over the shore. One of the quays also opened its dark jaws, and swallowed, in an instant, six hundred persons who had taken refuge on it. In a minute or two more, fresh calamities fell on the unhappy city, for the fires being hurled down among the fallen timbers, irresistible conflagrations broke out in several parts of the city.

An eye-witness describes the scene with simple force of detail. He says: "I perceived the house begin to shake, but did not apprehend the cause; but as I saw the neighbours about were all running down-stairs, I also made the best of my way, and by the time I had crossed the street and got under the piazzas of some low houses, it was darker than the darkest night I ever saw, and continued so for about a minute, occasioned by the clouds of dust from the falling of houses on all sides. After it had cleared up, I ran into a large square adjoining the palace on the west, the street I lived in to the north, the river to the south, and the custom-houses and warehouses to the east. But this dismal earthquake had such an influence upon the sea and river, that the water rose in about ten minutes several yards perpendicular. In that time I ran back into my room, got my hat and my cloak, locked up my room, and returned; but being alarmed with a cry that the sea was coming in, all people crowded forward to run to the hills, I among the rest, with Mr. Wood and family. We went nearly two miles through the streets, climbing over the ruins of churches, houses, &c., stepping over hundreds of dead and dying people, killed by the falling of buildings—carriages, chaises, and mules all lying crushed to pieces. And that day being a great festival in their church, and just at the time of celebrating their first mass, thousands were assembled in the churches, the major part of whom were killed; for the great buildings, particularly those built on any eminence, suffered the most damage, very few of the churches or convents having escaped. Before we got quite clear of the buildings, another shock came, just as I was passing over the ruins of a great church; but I, happily, got clear before any more tumbled down. We stayed near two hours in an open field; but a dismal scene it was, the people howling and crying, and the sacrament going about to dying persons. So I advised, as the best, to return to the square near our own house, and there wait the event, which we did immediately; but, by the time we got there, the city was in flames in several places at the same time. This completed the destruction of the city; for, in the terror all persons were, no attempt was made to stop it, and the wind was very high, so that it was communicated from one street to another by the

flashes of fire driven by the winds. It raged with great violence for eight days, and this in the principal and most thronged parts of the city. The people being fled into the fields half naked, the fire consumed all sorts of merchandise, household goods, and wearing apparel, so that hardly anything is left to cover people's nakedness, and they live in tents in the fields. If the fire had not happened, people would have recovered their effects out of the ruins; but this has made such a scene of misery and desolation as words cannot describe. The king's palaces in the city are totally destroyed; the tobacco and other warehouses, with the cargoes of three Brazil fleets, shared the same fate; in short, there are few goods left in the whole city. I believe few outstanding debts will be recovered, for those who have lost all cannot pay; and it is much to be feared others who have saved any effects will appear as poor as they can, to avoid parting with anything. All lawsuits are ended, for the records and papers are destroyed."

The scenes in every street were agonising to the heart, whether the survivors showed remorseless selfishness or heroic love. Some were exulting at having saved their money, and, indifferent to all else, merchants were digging, surrounded by the bodies of their children, for the altars of their idolatry—their iron chests. Here you saw a man weeping over the charred and crushed body of his wife; while others were trying to save some relic of their wealth. Many who had dragged their treasure into the centre of the squares were deserted by their servants and workmen, as the air got more heated, and the flakes of fire and the blinding smoke began to fall nearer and more threatening. Some, exerting strength hitherto dormant, dragged chests and valuables to the water-side, and there hired boats, at an enormous price, to take them on board vessels in the harbour that were returning from time to time to search for and save more, or to rescue and bring away friends. About fifty thousand persons perished in this earthquake, which also devastated the kingdom as far as Porto.

To add to the general misery, thieves and murderers, escaping from the shattered prisons, plundered and robbed indiscriminately. These men were chiefly Moors from the galleys, runaway English sailors, and French and Spanish deserters; one of these villains confessed to setting the India House on fire, and another to burning the ruins in seven places. The earthquake continued with gentle intermitting tremors, felt even on the river, for eighteen days.

Another observer says: "The king's palace, new opera-house, custom-house, India House, treasury, with all the public offices in general, fell a sacrifice to this dreadful conflagration. The fire burnt as it listed, for upon the second shock of the earthquake all the inhabitants endeavoured to fly, though many thousands perished in that attempt, having their brains knocked out, and being buried under those houses which fell as they passed by them, so

that when the fire began there were no inhabitants in the city to put out the fire. It raged nine days and nine nights with incredible fury. Yesterday I was over the city to view it: there are no signs of streets, lanes, squares, &c., but only hills and mountains of rubbish still smoking. His majesty, queen, and children are still encamped in the field at Belem, and all the inhabitants left alive are encamped in little tents on the hills about the city. Our apprehensions are not yet over, for yesterday morning, about ten minutes before one, we had such a shock as extremely alarmed us, so that we heard screams, and soon everybody were on their knees at prayer."

The losses to the merchants of Lisbon were enormous. The very records of their debtors were destroyed. Two houses alone lost fifty thousand pounds each. In one hour rich men had been turned into hopeless half-starved beggars.

An English captain, who had just taken his vessel from the custom-house, and anchored off Terceras, describes his feeling the motion of the water, and, looking back, saw the city tremble and fall to pieces. His account gives the terrible catastrophe in a fresh point of view. He says: "I beheld the tall and stately buildings come tumbling down with great cracks and noise, and particularly that part of the city from St. Paulo in a direct line to Boiraloito, as also at the same time that part from the said church along the river-side eastward as far as the gallows, and so in a curve line northwards again; and as far as St. José and the Roscio were laid prostrate in three following and subsequent shocks, which were so violent, as I heard many say, that they could with difficulty stand on their legs. Almost all the palaces and large churches were rent down or partly fallen, and scarce one house of this vast city is left habitable. Everybody that was not crushed to death ran out into the large places; and those near the river ran down to save themselves by boats, or any other floating conveyency, running, crying, and calling to the ships for assistance. But while the multitude were gathered near the river-side, the water rose to such a height, that it overcame and overflowed the lower part of the city, which so terrified the miserable and already dismayed inhabitants, who ran to and fro with dreadful cries, which we heard plainly on board, that it made them believe the dissolution of the world was at hand; every one falling on his knees, and entreating the Almighty for his assistance. The boatmen in the boats, as they were tossed on land by the sudden rise of the water, jumped on shore to save themselves, and immediately their boats were carried away by the retiring sea, which ebbed and flowed in four or five minutes."

Large ships lying high and dry at Bona Vista were floated off violently and carried unresistingly down the river, which was covered with boats, timber, and household goods from the quays. The timber in the royal arsenal was washed into the adjacent streets, which it rendered impassable. The sea at the bar broke

white as in a storm, and at the Castle of Rugio the garrison had to take shelter on the roof, and fire guns for help. Water rose in about five minutes sixteen feet, and fell in the same time for three shocks, and then the tide returned to its natural course. "I observed at the time the city fell," says one observer, "on the opposite side of the river many houses also fall, and the steep sand came tumbling into the river, which raised such a dust, that for five minutes I lost sight of the city, river, and ships. By two o'clock the ships' boats began to ply, and took multitudes on board. The English ships took off their countrymen and women, with which the shore was crowded, and many of the country people surrounded the English, and would not let them stir, saying they were safe in their company, as seeing they were somewhat less dismayed, which revived those who were most affected. Every one was begging pardon and embracing each other, crying, 'Forgive me, brother, sister, friend. Oh, what will become of us! Neither water nor land will protect us, and the fire seems now to threaten our total destruction.'"

The money saved was so blackened by the fire that for some time it was specified in commercial transactions whether a debt was to be paid in black or bright money.

The city, after the earthquake, is described as a piteous sight. Above the narrow noisome streets rose pyramids of charred and tottering house-fronts, and below lay piles of bodies half buried and half burnt. In the squares you met people who were ruined, wringing their hands, and crying, "The world is at an end." The fourth day, foot soldiers and dragoons were stationed in all the avenues to the city, to stop thieves or suspicious persons, who, if not owned, were hung directly, gallows being erected in several conspicuous parts of the city.

The next care was to feed the starving multitude, and in this good work the English were nobly zealous. All corn, flour, and rice was secured for the public, the mills were set working, and butchers' shops opened. Provisions, for the time, were admitted duty free. The merchants of the factories were particularly generous in sheltering and feeding the poor in their gardens, and they obtained the thanks of the king.

The promptitude with which warm-hearted England sent out money, clothing, and provisions for the relief of the sufferers, was not remembered with much gratitude. The proud Portuguese snatched at the relief, but cursed the heretical hands that sent it. One of their historians treats our benevolence as a mere commercial stratagem, although it happened that the King of Portugal had always placed barriers in the way of trade with England, and had evaded the clauses of preceding favourable treaties. Spain also behaved well, and received the same sort of gratitude.

This earthquake excited the profoundest interest among the scientific and philosophic throughout Europe. Goethe, though then only seven years of age, said it left in him

a feeling of distrust and want of reliance in the moral governor of the universe. Here was a great evil arising from no abused good, an evil, too, capable of no future palliation.

It was afterwards remembered that before and during the earthquake many curious phenomena had occurred in England and northern Germany, and the intervals between these phenomena seemed to clearly mark the velocity of the earthquake's advance. One of the most remarkable of these was the sudden reddening and muddying of the waters of the hot spring at Clifton.

The following are the atmospheric local phenomena, interesting to meteorologists, which preceded and attended this great earthquake.

In the year 1750, Lisbon experienced a slight but sensible tremor of the earth, and several very similar slight tremors were frequently perceived in the course of the four following years, which proved so very dry, that several springs and fountains, usually abundant, failed entirely. The wind mostly blew from the north or the north-east. The year 1755 was very wet and rainy. The summer was unusually cool; and during the forty days which preceded the earthquake the weather was clear, but not remarkably so. On the day immediately preceding that of the earthquake, a remarkable gloominess prevailed in the atmosphere, and the sun was obscured. At last, on the morning of the fatal day (November 1st), a thick fog arose early in the morning; but this was soon dissipated by the heat of the sun. There was no wind, nor the least agitation of the sea; the weather was remarkably warm. In the midst of this universal stillness, at thirty-five minutes after nine in the morning, a subterranean rumbling noise was heard, and soon after a tremendous earthquake shook the whole city. The shocks were at first short and quick; but they soon changed into another kind of vibration. . . . Another shock happened at about noon of the same day, and during this the walls of the few houses that remained standing were seen to open, about a foot from top to bottom, and then to close again, without hardly leaving a mark of the fissure. At Colares, about twenty miles from Lisbon, and two miles from the sea, on the last day of October, the weather was clear and uncommonly warm. About four o'clock in the afternoon there arose a fog, unusual at that time of the year, which came from the sea, and spread itself over the valleys. Soon after, the wind changing to the east, the fog returned to the sea, collecting itself and becoming very thick. As the fog retired, the sea rose with a prodigious roaring. On the 1st of November the sun rose with a serene sky, the wind continued at rest; but about nine o'clock the sun began to grow dim, and about half an hour after was heard a rumbling noise like that of chariots, which increased to such a degree that it became equal to the explosion of the largest cannon. Immediately a shock of an earthquake was felt, which was quickly succeeded by a second and third; and at the same time several light flames

of fire issued from the mountain, resembling the kindling of charcoal. In these three shocks the walls of the buildings moved from east to west. In another situation from whence the sea-coast could be discovered, there issued from one of the hills, called the Fojo, a great quantity of smoke, very thick, but not very black. This still increased with the fourth shock, and afterwards continued to issue in a greater or less degree. On visiting the place from whence the smoke was seen to arise, no signs of fire could be perceived near it."

This great earthquake of Lisbon, which in eight minutes swallowed about fifty thousand persons, had had a precursor in 1531, when, in the same city, fifteen hundred houses and thirty thousand persons were destroyed, and several neighbouring towns engulfed with all their populations. But the earthquake of 1755 convulsed the earth for five thousand miles, overturned St. Abes, and half destroyed the cities of Coimbra, Oporto, Braga, and Malaga; passed in a moment under the Straits; overset Fez, and buried twelve thousand Moors; wasted Madeira, overthrew two thousand houses at Mytilene, in the Archipelago, and never halted in its tremendous march till it reached Scotland.

We have no room here even to epitomise the chief earthquakes of the world. Even that of Lisbon seems trifling beside those of China (where everything is on a large scale), for at Pekin, in 1662, three hundred thousand persons were buried in a moment, and one hundred thousand again in the same city in 1731. Even England has had (Mrs. Somerville states) about two hundred and fifty-five recorded earthquakes, but all rather baby ones.

It is not for us to more than hint here at the possibility of such convulsions being occasioned by the sudden contact of subterranean water with subterranean fire, and the instant generation of vast volumes of explosive and irresistible steam. At present, science stands dumb before the earthquake, while the sceptic, credulous only to the wildest superstitions, claims it as an aberration, as a destructive disobedient force, and a revolt against the central law. A wider and more reverent knowledge may discover earthquakes, like lightning, comets, and aërolites, to be subject to some law of a different sphere, to which ours, when it crosses us, must yield obedience for higher and, at present, unknown ends.

TOUCHED TO THE HEART.

I'm not a romantic man, and, if I had had any leaning in that direction, a few Monday morning visits and reprimands from the board of directors would soon have cured me of the failing; but somehow or another I have found out that railway men are made of the same stuff as other men, and have hearts under their uniform coats.

It was no business of mine, if, while I was at the London terminus of the Great Dividend and Longshare Railway, I examined the tickets

and unlocked the carriages on the departure platform—it was no business of mine if a tall fair girl, in deep mourning, came twice a week regularly, and showed me her ticket for Westgate, return, second class. But somehow it seemed to be my business, when I had unlocked an empty carriage and handed her in as well as I could, that I should lock that door again without banging it, and then take care that no one else went in but lady-like females. Of course I could not help it, but from the very first day—cold winterly day—when, thinly dressed, she came shivering along the platform, I seemed to have some strange interest in her; and, as the weeks slipped by, I found myself looking out for her regularly. It was easy to see, from the music-roll she carried and the return ticket, that she went down the line to give lessons.

I called myself a fool, and thought of my salary as a guard, and my position in life as compared with the graceful lady-like girl who used to come floating along towards me every Monday and Wednesday morning, looking so pale and sad and careworn that I first began by pitying her, and then—well, never mind now.

One cold December day I was shifted for a week on to the arrival platform, and so missed seeing her leave; but I carefully watched every train that came in till I saw her get out. Without seeing me, she hurried away. Well, there was nothing to sigh for there, you'll say; but I did sigh all the same, and was turning away, when I saw the searching porter with a music-roll in his hand, which some one had left in a carriage.

"Here! I know who that belongs to," I said, snatching it from him; and then, seeing that he was going to make a bother, I slipped a sixpence into his hand, and ran out of the station.

Just in time: I could see her at the bottom of the street, and, catching hold of one of the boys hanging about for a job, I pointed the tall figure out, and told him to follow her to where she lived, and come back and tell me.

And not send the music-roll? No; I meant to take that. I did not know why, but there seemed something pleasant in the idea of being servant to her, and waiting on her; and I kept telling myself so as I walked back to attend to my duty.

Next morning I was in a quiet, shabby, lodging-letting place leading out of Gower-street North, with the music-roll in my hand, looking out for No. 21. It was easy enough to find, but something seemed to make me walk past two or three times before I could summon courage to go up and ring. But at last I did, thinking how foolish it was, when I only had to deliver the lost parcel, and come away.

So I rang gently, and waited; rang again, and waited; and then a red-faced woman came to the door.

"You have a young lady who teaches music—"

"Second-floor front," she said, snappishly.

"Why don't you knock twice? Bell's for the ground floor. There, go up!"

I took off my cap, wiped my shoes, and, feeling ashamed of my uniform for the first time in my life, went slowly up to the second floor, and then stopped; for I could hear a piano, and the sweetest voice I ever heard was singing to it in a low tone. I stopped, listening and drinking in the sweet sounds with my heart beating heavily, for it was a long way up; and I should have stopped longer, had I not heard some one coming up the stairs. Then I knocked, and a voice cried, "Come in!"

I turned the handle two or three times, for it was old and worn, and then, entering, stood blushing like a great girl, and trembling before the tall pale lady and some one lying upon a sofa in front of a very miserable fire.

Such a bare, chilly room, and so cold and pale both the inmates looked, as I stood observing all I could in the first glance.

"Oh, mamma, the music!" cried the pale girl, rising from her seat by the piano, and running towards me; and then, as I clumsily held it out, I saw that I was recognised, as she thanked me for bringing it, and also for what she called my kindness at the station.

"Ask him to take a glass of wine, Louise," said the lady on the sofa, when I saw the colour flush in her daughter's cheek, as she said, hastily:

"I think, mamma, we have none in the house."

I clumsily protested that I would rather not take any wine, and was backing towards the door, when a sudden pain shot through me, for I had detected a motion on the part of the pale girl, and caught sight of a shilling in her hand. I suppose I showed what I felt, for she paused, and coloured deeply, and, as I stood outside, she once more thanked me, passed the shilling hastily into her left hand, and held out the right to me.

I have some recollection of having taken it, and pressed it to my quivering lips, and then I was blundering along the streets in a sort of wild dream, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, but apparently lost.

The days went on till Christmas Eve. I had watched for her next coming to the station, and, as usual, seen to the carriage in which she went. I knew that I had nothing to hope for, being only a railway servant, and she a lady; but, for all that, it seemed my duty to watch over her, though since the day when I returned the folio her bows had been a little more distant, and she had hurried into the carriage.

But it was Christmas Eve, and all through that week I had not seen her. "Holidays," I said to myself, and then tried to be as busy as possible, to keep myself from thinking that it would be perhaps a month or six weeks before I saw her again. But there was no fear of my not being busy, for most people know what sort of a Christmas railway servants keep—all hurry, drive, bustle, worry, and rush. Dull heavy weather it was, yellow fog and driving snow. The trains

came in covered with white, which slowly thawed and dripped off, so that the terminus was wet, and cold, and miserably dirty. People didn't seem to mind it, though; for the station was thronged with comers and goers—friends coming to meet those from the country, and as many coming to see others off. "By yer leave," it was all day long, as the barrows full of parcels and luggage were run here and there along the platform. The place seemed alive with fish-baskets, oyster-barrels, and poultry; while somehow or another, from the poorest and shabbiest third-class people up to the grandees of the first class, every one looked happy and comfortable.

So there was I at it, helping to get train after train off—all late, of course; for, do what you would, there was no finding room enough for the people, and so it got to be past four, with the gas all alight and the fog and snow thicker than ever. A train was just starting, when there was a bit of confusion at the door. Some one shouts "Hold hard!" and then from where I was—some distance up the platform—I saw a gentleman hurry up to a first-class carriage, almost dragging a lady with him—a lady in black. Before any one could stop him, he had opened the door, pushed her in, and then followed, just as the train began gliding off.

This happened to be a carriage just put on, and the compartment the gentleman entered was locked; but he had one of the pocket railway keys, for before the carriage reached where I stood, with my heart somehow beating very strangely, I saw his hand out of the window, locking the door again. In the momentary glance I caught, as the lamps of the station flashed into the carriage, I could see that there was no light inside, while two little gloved hands pressed down the window the man tried to draw up; and there, pale and horror-stricken, eyes starting, and lips open, as if she were crying "Help!" I saw the face of the young governess.

The time did not appear long enough to see so much, but I saw all that, and my mind seemed to keep up with my eyes and explain it all; and I knew that there was some infernal piece of villainy on the way.

"What to do?" seemed rushing through my mind, as in the agony I felt I turned all of a tremble. Telegraph to the station in front to stop the train, which was the express, with fifty miles to run before pulling up?—send a special engine and tender after them? How could I do either on my own responsibility, and only on suspicion? Should I go and report it? I should have half an hour wasted in questioning, and then perhaps be told that it was time enough to act when there was 'proved ground to work upon. And what had I to advance? Nothing but that appealing look for aid from her I loved.

"Her I loved!" Yes, I knew it now; and I knew, too, that, to be of service, I must act—act at the risk of life or limb. I thought all this,

running after the train, fast gliding along past the platform.

I had lost too much time already as I darted along, for in a few more seconds it would have been impossible to overtake the fast-receding carriages. There was a shouting behind me as I ran; one porter stood right in my way looking after the red lights, and, in passing, I knocked him over. The platform past, and, bounding along the incline at the end, I was out in the snowy night, when I tripped over one of the point handles, and fell heavily, uttering a cry of despair; but I was up again directly, and running along the rough line amidst crossing metals and rods that threatened to throw me every instant.

It seemed the act of a madman to run now, for the red lights were some distance ahead, and gradually growing dim and blurry amid the fog; but through the thick snow I ran panting on, with my breath coming shorter and heavier, and a hot burning sensation at my chest, while it seemed that I could taste blood, though my mouth was dry and hot.

All at once my heart leaped and every nerve tingled. From the fast vanishing train came a long shrill whistle, which I knew well enough meant red signals in front, while, to my unutterable joy, the end lamps of the guard's van showed plainer and plainer as I panted on.

Another stumble and fall over the point rods—and I was up again, heedless that my hands and forehead were bleeding, and that I had lost my cap. There were the lamps plainer and plainer, for the train had almost stopped; but now, a hundred yards ahead, could I overtake it before it started again? The suspense was horrible. I felt my head swim as I panted on.

Fifty yards passed, and the red lamps still receding, but bigger and less dim. On still, gasping and choking, and drawing my breath with difficulty. Not twenty yards off, and, if I could have run, another few seconds would have seen me holding on by a carriage handle; but I could only go at a heavy trot.

"Bang! bang!" went a couple of fog-signals, and hope rose again as the engine slackened pace once more, and, almost at a walk, I panted on—nearer, nearer, nearer—the red lights growing brighter and plainer; and at last, just as the engine gave a final shriek and dashed on all clear, I laid my hand on the red bull's-eye, and the next moment was sitting clinging to the foot-board of the guard's van.

The fog had been my friend. In another few seconds I must have dropped; while, in an ordinary way, the train would have been miles down the line by this time.

"Bang! bang!" went the fog-signals again, as I sat helplessly there, with my legs drawn up, and again we slackened for a few seconds; but all clear once more, and we were dashing on, and fast getting into full swing as I rose up, and, opening the door, stood with the guard of the train.

"Pooh! nonsense!" he said. "You're mad. I shan't stop the train."

"Then I shall," I shouted, making towards the wheel connected with the gong upon the engine.

"Not if I know it, you won't," he said, stopping me.

I was too weak and done up to scuffle with him.

"Will you come with me to the next carriage, then?" I said.

He only shook his head.

"Will you lend me your key?" I said; for I had dropped my own when I fell.

He shook his head again, and then it struck me that perhaps he might stop me, seeing how rough and wild and excited I looked. I backed slowly towards the door, facing him all the time. He told me afterwards, if he had not felt afraid, he would have pinned me while I turned my back.

But I didn't turn my back, and the next moment I was outside on the long step clinging to the door handle, and with the guard leaning out and watching me.

"Come back!" he shouted, as we dashed along at full speed now, rushing through the darkness ahead, and giving a wild shriek as we passed a station, the lights looking like one streak. There were the carriages shaking and the wind tearing at me as if to beat me off; but I was recovering myself fast, and in a few moments I was at the end of the guard's van, leaning towards the carriage I wanted to reach.

So far my task had been easy, though, of course, very dangerous, with the train dashing along at fifty miles an hour; but now there was a gap to pass between the van and the carriage, for the buffers keep the carriages at some distance apart. For a few moments I stopped in dread, but, as I got my breath more and more, courage and the recollection of her wild appealing face came to me, and, clinging to the buffers, I contrived to get one foot on to the step of the carriage, and, still holding on by the iron, tried to get the other there.

Just then the train gave a jerk, and I thought it was all over; but the next moment I was on the step, and had hold of the door-handle.

"At last," I muttered, as I drew myself up on to the next step, and tried the door, which was, as I expected, fast. Then I looked back. There was the guard, with half his body out, and his hand screening his eyes, trying to follow my motions; but, with the darkness all round, the snow cutting by like knives and points, and the dense fog-clouds we kept entering, I felt sure he could not see me, though I could make him out from the light in his compartment. Then I listened, and my heart seemed to stand still; for I fancied I could hear the sound of a struggle going on inside, though I was not sure, from the rattling made by the train. I was not wasting time, for I had tried to look in at the window; and, after opening my knife with my teeth, was

trying to open the door. But the interior of the carriage was dark as pitch, and my knife was useless, while now I was sure there was a struggle going on inside. Directly after, one of the little side panes of glass was broken, and I heard a faint cry.

I dashed in the door-window in an instant, cutting my hands with the thick glass, and then, beating out the loose pieces, made a place for entrance, and had half my body in before I felt myself seized by some one who tried to force me back.

Two hands held me by the throat, while I grasped the door with one hand, half in and half out of the carriage. My blood was up. I had hold of my unseen enemy by the collar, and I dug my knuckles into his neck as I held on for life like a bull-dog.

I had the advantage of him there, for, while I had on a stiff collar and buttoned-up uniform-coat, he had only a thin dress shirt-collar, and one of those black wisps of ties. It was a struggle for life and death with me, but I got further and further in. At last, I suppose, feeling half choked, he started back and drew me with him, so that I fell heavily on the floor.

Here, though, I lost my hold, and he had me again at a disadvantage. For what seemed a good five minutes, it was an up and down struggle, while more than once I felt myself dashed against somebody who was crouching in a corner of the carriage.

Sometimes I got the better and sometimes the worst off. After the struggle had been going on some time, it seemed that the far door was open, and that there was no one else in the carriage but us two, hanging on to one another like a pair of wild beasts. Then came such a horrible reaction that my strength seemed to leave me, for I felt that in her fear and dread the poor girl had leaped out.

But she had not, for she was outside, clinging for life to the handles, as in one brief glance I saw by the end light of the train flashing upon her. In a last fierce struggle my foot tripped, and I and the man I was struggling with fell headlong out of the door. There was a flash of light, the sound of rushing wind, and then I seemed to be dashed with fearful violence upon the ground.

The next thing I recollect is the sound of voices, and the hissing of the steam of an engine close by me, while some two or three people were moving about with lanterns. I found some one supporting my head; and then I gave a shudder, for there were horrible red patches and marks on the white ground. As the men spoke in whispers, I could see they were collecting together something horrible, that steamed in the cold air. A mist came over me, and I fainted dead away.

When I could think again, I found that I had been some time in a London hospital, and was lying there in a ward, looking at a pair of soft white hands that didn't seem to belong to me, while my head felt cool through my hair being cut off.

But I got stronger every day, and soon I had visitors to see me; and one face that came, and used to lean over my poor bare pallet, was, as it were, the face of an angel—so sweet, so loving, and so tender in its compassionate look; and once, while the old lady stood back, two tiny soft hands smoothed my pillow, and a tear fell on my cheek, as a voice whispered:

"God bless you, my brave preserver."

I shut my eyes then, and trembled, for there was a bitter feeling of sorrow came over me, and, in spite of those tender words, I seemed to be standing on the brink of a great gulf, far away from her.

As I grew stronger, I learned from her mother how they had been deceived. It was through answering an advertisement for a governess that the poor girl had met with insult. She had been deluded into accompanying the gentleman, under pretence of his taking her to his home, a few miles down the line. He had paid the penalty of the crime he had meditated with his life. An up train tore him to pieces—an up train which must have passed within a few inches of my head.

The train from which we fell had been stopped by the guard a few miles further down, when the poor girl was found clinging outside the carriage. An engine and tender were sent back in search of us, to find us as I have already told.

I only saw her once again, when she gave me this—this little purse, just as you see. She spoke to me kindly and tenderly, and they were words of praise, I think; but I saw her only through a mist, and the thought that it was for the last time seemed to fill my mind so that I could only speak huskily. I kissed one of her hands as she said "Good-bye;" and then I was standing alone—alone in the world, without aim or hope. You will please to remember that she was a lady, and that I am—only a railway servant.

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By CHARLES DICKENS
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A NEW SERIAL STORY
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[PRICE 2d.]

THE DEAR GIRL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BELLA DONNA," "NEVER FORGOTTEN," &c.

CHAPTER XVIII. THE CONVALESCENT.

A WEEK or two after Mr. West had gone over to England, it was a picture to see Mr. Blacker and Mrs. Dalrymple discussing the newest scandal.

"My dear ma'am," Mr. Blacker was saying, holding up his usual glass of English wine to the light, and his head bent close to hers, "such a business! They're all talking of it. That poor foolish thing, Mrs. Wilkinson! Her doings are really past charity."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Dalrymple, "I was afraid of that all along, Mr. Blacker—ever since that very night of our little party."

"Can't tell you how grieved I am. Really, Ernest Beaufort is as nice and gentlemanly a fellow as you'd meet, and I am sorry to see him going that way."

"Tell me about it, Mr. Blacker, do!"

"Why, you see, the man's in there morning, noon, and night. Wilkinson, though the best creature in the world, has no sense—no head."

Things were indeed beginning to be pretty much as Blacker had described. Young Mrs. Wilkinson had come from a country parish, unsophisticated, with a rustic consciousness of her own charms. The homage she received here, at Dieppe, was even agreeable to her husband, and was so new to them both, that it dazzled them into a sense of having been quite thrown away at home. Lucy had come to know Mrs. Wilkinson intimately, and, with that enthusiasm in friendship which belongs to young girls, saw nothing but perfection in her. When that well-meaning person, Mrs. Dalrymple, took counsel with Mr. Blacker, she gave Lucy a little warning on the matter, but was met by a vehement defence and an agitated defiance. It was ungenerous, unkind, she said, and it would not have the least effect on her. It was indeed only to be expected from the mean, miserable creatures of the place, whose only occupation was coining slanders. As papa said, this food is the only thing that keeps them alive. Not a little scared at this reception, the honest lady went her way, and Lucy henceforward seemed ostentatiously to challenge the looks and whis-

pers of the "canaille" who colonised the place, by appearing a great deal on the Prado, and seeing the packet come in—a spectacle she detested—always beside the clergyman's wife, and in company of that brilliant cavalier, Mr. Ernest Beaufort, whom she disliked even more. "Lulu, the dear girl," her father would say fondly, "is always impulsive; her character is developing every hour. But she's loyal to her own cloth."

Meanwhile, other more personal matters were engaging her attention. Since the great dramatic scene of the wreck, a cloud of romance had hung about. Days and hours went by in a sort of delightful agitation. The brave deliverer, Colonel Vivian, had been brought home, as we have seen, insensible, dangerously hurt, beaten almost out of life by the waves—and for a short time it was doubtful whether he could be brought through. It was Miss Lucy herself who had flown to fetch the nearest physician, Dr. White. Fortunately for himself, he was at home, having his hair dressed by a friseur of reputation, and who thus secured a retainer for the most lucrative "job" of his whole life. This was "poor Macan's old luck," who lived far off, in the cheap quarter. Lucy, who knew his case, and privately compassionated his struggles, the swarming children, and the rest, would have infinitely preferred to have brought him. But what could she do? Time was precious, moments golden. But in a place like this, the distribution of medical practice became like a step of political promotion. The question was asked and answered, "Who was attending the colonel?" We should have heard the exasperated answer of Dr. Macan himself: "Yes, sir, it was all done, sir, and arranged beforehand, and plotted between White and that man, Dacres, and his daughter. What would you say to one of your daughters running wild through the town to fetch her friend—without a bonnet, too, I'm told? And all for one of these free military men, that have hacked about from garrison to garrison! It's disgraceful and scandalous, even in this scandalous place. That fellow Jacks, his landlord, tells me she sits up there half the day, and some of the night too, smoothing his pillow, and all that humbug. We know what that will mean one of these fine mornings. It's disgraceful and discreditable!"

"Ah, ah! poor Mac," says Captain Filby,

chuckling, "it falls cruelly on you. Let us, one and all, devoutly pray that White may not get his fees; though one of the lies of this lying place is, that Vivian has, or will have, a good two thousand a year. My good Mac, didn't you learn in your own country that girls won't stick at a trifle for *that*? and I tell you, my friend, with this care of a man in that state—'I'll only take my medicine from *your* hand;' 'When the damps are on my brow, a ministering angel thou'—and all that flummery, he gets soft, and tender, and weak. If she's worth a pinch of salt, she'll land him easy."

"And by what arts?" asked the doctor, vehemently. "It's a conspiracy between her and that fellow White. I should blush, sir, for one of my own daughters. If it was to get ten times two thousand a year——"

"Folly, Mac. We know about that. The dear girl, Lulu, is on the right side of the hedge, where you'd wish one of your sweet ones to be. What difference does a story or two make? The scandal-mongers here may talk, provided the curtain comes down well at last on the village church and the parson."

That even the name of the innocent Lulu, as pure and gentle a nature as ever came into the world, should be thus sullied, seemed shocking; but the license of the place spared nothing, and was all the more directly challenged by a view of simplicity and nature, which, it considered, had no proper place among them. Doctor Macan, inflamed by the length of Vivian's illness, moodily poured out fresh griefs and fresh slanders to every one who would listen to him: "Nice business—a young girl of eighteen waiting on this officer, sitting all alone by his bedside. It's a scandal and a shame. I'd like to see one of my daughters, &c."

The picture, it must be owned, was not a bit overdrawn. Lucy—the sick man's lodging being only at the other side of the street—was always fluttering across. Lucy considered it a sacred duty to be in attendance. Even the young landlady and her husband, having the deepest sympathy, thought of their own love and difficulty, and prayed that Lucy's care of Vivian might be rewarded. Two such tender hearts, two such handsome figures, were surely made for each other. He was made for her; she for him. *He must*, if he had the soul of honour—which he had surely—on his recovery, lay all at her feet.

No vestige of such a thought found its way into Lucy's head. She was doing a glorious duty, for the sake of one who, she had a conviction in her heart of hearts, had suffered cruelly from some unknown persecution. Her father—now gloomy, now in absurdly high spirits—looked on passively and smiled. "The dear girl! Impulsive, sir, but full of character. The poor traveller opposite fell among thieves. Those thieves of the world, the waves that break upon the shore! A grand spectacle. Tum tum ti. When the stormy winds do blo-o-ow. Full of glorious impulses, that child, sir! There, she trots off over the way

to that fine fellow, who imperilled *his* life to *save* life, sits by him, reads to him, smooths his crumpled pillow. There it is; we know the value of women, though, God knows, we treat 'em cavalierly enough when we have health and wealth and strength." This remark Mr. Dacres made in a personally reproachful way to a friend, though no one realised its truth better than he did himself.

The quick-eyed reader will see to what things are tending. The colonel recovered slowly, and presently was sitting up in his little salon, Doctor White infinitely satisfied with the progress made; having falsified the dark prophecy made by Doctor Macan: "Mark my words! He won't stick at manslaughter, if it suits his plans." Towards Doctor White, Lucy felt much kindness and gratitude, and spoke, in her impulsive way, and everywhere, of his great cleverness. It was a pity discretion had not been one of the extras taught at Miss Pringle's establishment. Lucy had cleverness, wit, tenderness, softness, affection; but she wanted this most precious of all qualities. Yet her behaviour was natural. She knew she was on a stage, as it were, before a set of free habitués in the pit, with their opera-glasses. She despised them heartily, and wished, by a perverseness, that she could show them how she despised them and their whispers, and reports about *this* matter, that now began to reach her. It only made her more loyal than ever to her friend. One day came an anonymous letter in jingling rhyme, and which could only be called anonymous by courtesy, as somehow many people had seen a copy, and the witty production was considered one of young Daly's happiest efforts. The rhymes were in this strain:

Oh, who would not be such a good-looking colonel?
Attended so nicely in watches nocturnal?
With Lucy for nurse, may my pains be eternal!

Lucy's eyes flashed, and her cheeks blazed, as she read this doggerel. She crumpled it up, flung it into the grate, and, with a proud independence, crossed over at once, and went in to see her patient. She wished the whole colony of the recreant, malicious creatures, who stabbed in the dark, could be drawn up in two lines to see her cross and go in—she despised them so heartily. Vivian was sitting up, pale, but growing stronger every hour, when she entered. With him, as we may conceive, it was nearly the same as with her.

Yet she was a little surprised, and sometimes pained, by the sorrowful and disturbed way in which her patient would look at her, and the cold restraint and embarrassment that he would sometimes assume. She would have been under the impression that she had offended him, and went away grieved. After such a departure, "Jacks" and his little wife would hear him pacing about overhead with wonder; for they did not dream he had strength for such a thing. When she came again, he would be all tenderness and grateful sweetness—a perfect Bayard, as he seemed to her. With her, indeed, the whole

stages of it went on smoothly enough, and as a matter of course: to him, she could not guess what a struggle it brought.

When she entered, on this day of the anonymous letter, she saw that gloom and embarrassment was over him, and, after some hesitation, he said to her:

"My dearest Miss Lulu, if I may call you so, I am now nearly well—in fact, well; and I can only say, if I was to have been attended by Doctor White *alone*, I should never have got through. If I dared to speak all I feel in the way of the deepest gratitude——"

"Gratitude," said Lucy, impetuously, "for what? Coming across the street? It was a pleasure to me—the greatest delight. And, though I felt, and we *all* felt, for what you suffered, still, I must say, it will long be for me *such* a happy time to look back to."

"A very happy time," he repeated, hurriedly, "though I felt the pain. But that is what I have been trying to shut my eyes to all this time, hoping that all this would merely fall into the shape of a common convalescence, or perhaps—which might have been the best solution—things might have taken another turn, and settled for me in the most satisfactory way of all. But now, dear Lucy, you won't think me ungrateful if I say I must go away, and, if at once, all the better. I ought not to have stayed here—should never have come here."

Lucy looked at him with a face in which wonder and pain were compounded. "Why should you say this?" she asked. "Have we offended you? Go away! I thought you were to stay months; and poor Jaques——"

He smiled. "Poor Jaques would not be the difficulty. Offended me? No! Alas! very far from that! But it is better, and I have thought it over deeply, anxiously, and miserably—it is better I should get away with all speed. As it is, I have suffered, and shall suffer, for coming——"

Suddenly it flashed on her. Her little heroic look came into her face. She spoke with a mixture of enthusiasm and scorn, "with quite a touch of Joan of Arc," as her father said of her, once.

"I know—I know it all, now. It is some of this wretched talk. These stories: they have been sending you these papers. It is base and contemptible, and those who are really pure and innocent can despise them. If it be only *that*, you must not go away. We are now only beginning to know you. Stay, to oblige me, and," here her lip curled, "if only to show the creatures round us how heartily we loathe and despise them."

Who can argue with a bit of nature like this? Such defiance is irresistible. What could the patient do but sigh, look at her with smiling admiration, and yield? Still, she could not help noticing that he was growing more dejected, and Jaques's wife came to tell her she feared the poor brave gentleman had some sore trouble on his mind, for he looked so worn and fatigued; "and," she added, with mystery, "always walking—walking about his room! Oh, miss,

he has some little sweet pain (*douleur*) at his heart, and I *think* I can guess." So she could; for she was an expert; and this little insinuation was exquisitely welcome, bringing a faint colour into Lucy's cheeks. From these premises we may conceive how things were hurrying forward, on the immemorial principles; and though Lucy was pained at times by a return of the colonel's curious doubts, still it was plain to the whole town what was going on.

Mr. Dacres had seen it from the first, "with half an eye," to use his favourite expression. He gave the dear girl "the reins on her neck;" for, as he assured his friends, "nature—nature, sir, with her unerring instinct, will guide her straight." He looked on, smiling, and secretly approved of the whole. "Let Lulu chalk out her own little course. God forbid I should put stay, let, or impediment in the way of my child's happiness." He, indeed, infinitely preferred this new arrangement; for he had, himself, fallen into the habit of going over and sitting with his friend, cheering him up, by telling him some of his best circuit stories, which the other did not in the least care for, and talking with fatherly rapture over the perfections of Lulu.

"She'd put her hands under my feet, sir, that girl. Very curious, she is, in her little way. I would no more attempt to control her than I would that poker. Yet she'd do anything for me and for poor mamma. She treats me like a brother. It's Harco here, and Harco there! Only last week I said I couldn't have her running wild, in and out, in this way—troubling you in this sort of way—when a man wants to get well, you know. Well, sir, I might as well have spoken to that *ormolu pendule*. 'What,' says she, 'Harco, give up the only little treat I have in the day—the only gleam of sunshine in this gloomy place—the little holiday hour I look forward to? I can't, indeed, Harco.'"

Mr. Dacres had made inquiries at home about Colonel Vivian, found that he was a man of property, and in command of a regiment out at Gibraltar; in short, discovered that the colonel's account of himself was borne out by collateral evidence—a state of things always to any one's credit in that colony. The protracted absence of West offended him. It was nice work, slipping away in that fashion—no letters—no excuses! What was the fellow about? And he dwelt long on this as a grievance. Then he would come back to his Lulu.

"I don't know what's over her. There's a restlessness—a disinclination to meet her father's eye. The child has something on her mind, and she won't tell. But I'll find out. Yet you know, my dear colonel, there's a delicacy in these things—to be probing the heart of your own child—to be sitting like a coroner, and taking evidence. No, I can't do it, though other fathers may."

After such an interview, Colonel Vivian would be heard tramping up and down, and any inquisitive maid, at the door, would have heard him say, almost in an agony, "I *must* go—I dare not remain!"

But he did remain, and grew strong again,

to go out into the fresh air, and appear on the Corso, to the triumph of our Lucy, who was proud of her share in that recovery, and heard, with a thrill, the whisper, "There he is!" For the gallant rescue was still talked about. And it was in one of these first walks that the unlucky Mr. West, just landed, met them.

CHAPTER XIX. CONSTANCE.

To that night Margaret often looked with a shudder. He affected to talk of what he had seen and heard in his travels, but she knew he was raging in his heart. As the evening drew on, the bright look seemed actually to fade out of his face; the old look, which he had taken away with him, to return. He barely sat out their little dinner.

"I can't stay shut up here," he said, starting up; "I must have air. Forgive me, Margaret—the first night, and all—but I must go. I have been accustomed, of late, to the open places of England."

She said nothing, but how she felt for him! How she would have felt for him, had she seen him going along up the loneliest walk of the place, unconscious of everything, and when he reached the open field at the top talking aloud:

"God! that it should come to this! What have I done? What crime have I committed, to be punished in this way? What will become of me? How shall I keep my head—my wits? She did it on purpose to play with me—mock—make a fool of me. And, O my God! let me learn to pray that all thoughts of revenge may be kept away from me!"

He was walking along rapidly, and talking in this incoherent way.

"God forgive her! God forgive her!"

It sounded more like, "God punish her! God punish her!"

"What is to become of me? What is life for me? Another series of wretched loneliness and miserable thoughts pursuing me everywhere. All wrecked again, and never to recover for years. Oh! what deep, wicked, *cruel* malice—and what folly to meet it! One lesson should have been enough, but I was not to be taught."

When he came in, that night, his sister stole a look at him, and saw the traces of a hopeless dejection and despair in his face. It wrung her very heart. She saw before them both a time of agony worse than any that had gone before; and in her room that night she did not pray that vengeance should not enter into her heart. Her words were more unmeasured:

"That demon, with her false ways, her smooth face, and soft words! How dare she? But, if I live and have strength, she shall be punished."

Miserable night! Though the sum of unhappiness and squalor made a large total in the colony, there was no such misery as theirs in the meanest little lodging. A worn and wistful face, that of Constance, the little cousin, looked in on him as he sat abstracted and by himself that night. Margaret had come to her and almost sternly bid her go to him. "God help us all," she said to her; "you don't

know what is coming, and the misery that is before us. We had this once before. You encouraged him, recollect, in this folly—a fine piece of self-sacrifice, as *you* thought it! You set him against me and his own sisters, just to gratify his present humour. I knew him better. See what it has come to now!" Yet she was not angry. She could not but have compassion for that soft gentle face, which had now grown so worn and wistful. "You speak to him, and try and comfort him, if you can. He likes you. I have not the arts for *that*. And yet I warned him. Oh, if Heaven doesn't punish *her*, and soon; let her take care that I do not reach her."

Constance stole in upon him. He looked up and started, and greeted her with a show of interest. "Ah, my poor Constance. Your foolish cousin has come back to you. Well, you see how the Machiavellian advice has ended. You are no doctor, I fear, my child, and had better keep to the household. Our crafty plot has not brought us much."

"Oh," she exclaimed, passionately, "I am wretched and miserable. Yes, it was all my doing, and I shall never forgive myself."

He was startled at her real grief. "No, no, my dear child, you must not think that. And I don't mean it. It was my own old folly, and it has served me right. When a man could be such a child as I have been, it is right I should suffer. But all I ask is;—let us shut the subject out as quick as we can. Let me bury my own folly as soon as need be; and, above all, I rely on you, dear Constance, to keep the news of this humiliation from my sister. Of course you must pity or feel even a contempt for me. I can't help that. All my life has been a struggle, and I know what a poor weak creature I am and shall be. I have done my best, and I have suffered for it, and am now going to suffer more. But I rely on *you* for one thing at least, and you will do me a real service, to control one who makes too much of such"—and he smiled—"of such a trifle. We must learn to bear these things. Now leave me, like a dear child."

Early the following morning she found him with the same hopeless look of dejection, but with, also, an affected air of cheerfulness, which made her very heart sink. He was writing letters. "Tell me of something to do, Margaret," he said; "after this long holiday I have had, I should do some work." He had several letters by him finished. One was to Mr. Levy, the Jew gentleman, in which he most earnestly pressed him to conceal all mention of his name in the recent settlement; in fact, he was to assure Mr. Daeres that the whole was merely an exercise of his own forbearance and indulgence. He hinted, too, that any further liquidation would depend on the observance of this condition. "They shall not know I have been such a dupe of theirs," he said to himself, as he folded it.

Then he wrote to Sir John Trotter, with a similar request. As for the house Westown, and "middle-age Jenkinson," he thought of

the sensible old servant's prophecy. Yes, it might be finished now, as it had been begun; and they would both go over there, fly from this horrid place after a time, for he must stay and see the end.

In those days a horrible restlessness came on him, and he could not sit quiet at home. He felt that periodical sinking at the heart which occurs when some great matter is in the transition stage; and he would start up and go out, and walk by the sea on the bleak and bare edge of the coast that faced England. On this very morning, as he was going along, one friend he met asked had he been ill in England? Then he saw Lucy tripping along with a face bright, full of hope, looking forward as to the brightest future, now fast drawing on. She was coming from the post, her favourite errand, and had her hand full of letters. She looked charming, he thought;—this being possessed with one thought or one image, lighting up eyes, face, and all.

"Oh, I am so glad I met you. We were going to see you to-day. I am very glad you have come back. Do you know, you were away a whole age?"

"Was I?" he said, in a cold and indifferent way that he could assume when he pleased. "It seemed to me hardly a week."

"And such events have taken place during your absence. You heard of the storm and the shipwreck, and of Colonel Vivian's gallant behaviour. Oh, it was noble, was it not? It was in all the papers!"

This dear girl was so genuine, and so possessed with that one thought, that she thought it only natural to speak of what was uppermost in her mind. She did not see even how he winced.

"I was down there," she went on. "I saw it all. It was a thing I shall remember to my dying day."

"I know," he said, bitterly; "we had it all in our London papers."

She looked at him with some surprise. Town life had spoiled him.

"By the way," he said, abruptly, "you remember I said something, going away, about looking after your father's debts and difficulties." He leant on the words with a sort of satisfaction. "Well, the fact is, I have had so much to do with my own private affairs—getting Westown restored for my sister and I to live there——"

"Are you going to live there?" she said, with some astonishment.

"Why not, pray?" he said, with the same bitter smile. "No harm, I hope, in the owner of a place going back to it? There is more reason, surely, for our going there than for our staying in this place?"

Again was Lucy distressed—surprised.

"But as for your father's affairs—as I say, I was so busy going about, really I had not time to——"

Her face fell.

"It was unreasonable to expect it," she said. "And yet you have always been so kind and generous, and your saying so——"

"Do you bind me down by a careless expression, as if by a bond, Miss Dacres?"

Lucy's eyes flashed.

"I bind you down to nothing," she said, drawing herself up. "You were good enough to say you would do something while you were in town. We would have scorned any pecuniary obligation, as we did before; and thank Heaven we are under none now. I think it was unkind of you, and it will be a sore disappointment to my poor father, to whom I dropped a hint of what you said. He was reckoning on it."

"I cannot help that," he said, growing excited. "What obligation, what tie, is there, that I should be expected to come forward and make these sacrifices? I do not mean to be a fool *all* my life."

The look of pity she gave him was indescribable. "I see," she said, after a pause; "I understand. And this helps me to tell you what I should have had to tell you later. You remember," and she looked down, "a bargain we once made—that after a time I was to try and see if I could learn to like and love you, so as hereafter to see if I could with perfect happiness cast my lot with yours——"

"Perfectly," he said, with the same attempt at being sardonic. "Only, I think, there was no agreement exactly——"

"So much the better," she said; "for I can tell you now that I see it would be hopeless to look for happiness in such an arrangement."

"And do you tell me," he said, passionately—"do you venture to tell me that what has passed to-day has led you to that? Do you suppose I can accept such a story? Oh! for shame! for shame! I am not so steeped in folly as that, now."

"I did not say anything like that," said Lucy, with her voice trembling. "And it is unworthy to insinuate such an idea. I do not say it is unkind, for I expect no kindness from you. Heaven knows what has changed you!"

"Changed! That is not so bad a way to turn it. I see your father's lessons have not been thrown away. Have I not eyes, pray? What have I seen myself within these few hours that I have been here? What is the idle talk of the place busy with? And you have the courage to think I can accept an excuse of this sort. With such an obvious reason, why resort to such deception?"

She was too genuine a girl to think of denying what he said. Its truth had never struck her before. But, strange to say, it never occurred to her that Mr. West had cause of complaint, or that he was suffering from jealousy.

"You cannot deny it, I see. I congratulate you. But take care. It may not turn out so smoothly as you think. But come, let us not amuse the gossips here with a history of our disagreement."

This was too late a caution; for here was Captain Filby coming round the corner, with an amused look in his eyes. He told of

the scene later—"the duet," as he called it; "she flashing and flourishing at him, and that poor fool begging and pleading with a hang-dog, sheep-faced look. I declare it was as good as Drury Lane. What soft heads we do find in this world!"

As Mr. West turned away, he heard a light step and a quick rustle, and eyes, that had watched his face of bitter disappointment and agony, now hastily turned away. Constance, with a timorous look, stole on her quiet march down the street. In the colony every one of any age and degree could thus go about, and the easy canons of society did not exact chaperons. He walked after her impatiently.

"*She* knows it all. They will all know my humiliation. That man will take care to spread it." Then he came up with Constance, and said a little bitterly: "So you are like the rest. Do you find me too gloomy and troublesome, that you must pass me in the street?"

"I, Cousin Gilbert!" she almost faltered. "I thought, as you liked so much being alone, I was afraid you would not wish me to trouble you. Indeed that was the reason."

"I suppose it was; indeed, I know it was, and I speak my thoughts. For, oh! I find it very hard of late to be sweet tempered."

"Oh, cousin, if you only knew how I feel for you, and if I only knew how to help you, or to soothe your trouble, I would be so happy!"

"Poor little Cousin Constance," he said, kindly taking her hand. "What are you talking of? Trouble, indeed! That is a fine and complimentary name for a full-grown man's folly. That at my age I should have been betrayed into such foolishness!"

"Not folly," said she, warmly, "unless we call generosity, nobleness, kindness, goodness, folly. But what name could I give to the heart that could play with such qualities, and make light of them? I call it wickedness."

He turned round to look at her, a little surprised at her warmth.

"My dear Constance, you cannot understand. The real criminal, the real fool, is beside you. One might say it would be a good lesson—only I am past all that."

They were at the corner of the place which led to their house.

"Now," she said, timorously, "I shall run home. It was very good of you to let me go with you. I know you like your solitary walks."

"Lonely!" he repeated. "Yes, it is better to expend my selfishness on myself. Come," he said, with an air of gaiety, "let us come to the hill, my favourite walk, and I shall tell you some of my adventures in England."

She saw this was an enforced gaiety, and, what was worse, all the colony could read in his face the whole history of his mortifications and sufferings. They were amused by watching his restless, eager eyes, which affected to avoid, while they followed, the movements of the other pair. The colony was also watching

his wandering manner, his flushing cheek, and noted also the haughty defiant air of Lucy towards him, who considered herself unkindly and ungenerously treated, and said she would never, never, forgive Mr. West for the bitter things he had said to her!

Constance, in a demure "*Sister of Charity*" way, saw and heard these things, and would have given the world to have told him; but this was too great a liberty to take with one she so worshipped at a distance.

ANOTHER WORKHOUSE PROBE.

"PREFER it, sir?" said the Staffordshire workhouse master, energetically; "they're downright fond of it, and proud, too, I can tell you, for there's none of the unions about here has a 'earse to touch it. No difficulty about getting 'em to attend funerals now; all the old men volunteer, and we've six nice suits of black, so that we give most of 'em an out in turn. You see there was a good deal of dissatisfaction before, for a corpse is a heavy thing to carry, our inmates bein' mostly old and infirm, and the ground between this and the cemetery stuit. Consequently, when the old inmates had to git up this hill—you can see it over yonder, sir, between the trees to the right—they grumbled, and said it wasn't fair. To the guardians? Oh, no, sir, they wouldn't go so far as *that*—but to each other; and then some of the board saw 'em struggling on, and almost breaking down with a coffin between 'em in the hot weather; and a motion was brought on and carried, and all was settled, and this beautiful 'earse got in less than three weeks; for our guardians are kind men, sir, and like to bury their paupers well. Can the infirm mourners ride on it? Well, two of 'em can, in front, and the rest follow two and two. I wish you could see 'em, sir; it makes a funeral good enough for anybody; and they're all anxious to go directly we've a death in the house. You see for yourself what the 'earse is" (patting it affectionately, as if it were a favourite snuff-box), "handsome and well proportioned, but yet neat; and I do assure you there aren't one like it in any of the unions in the county. It's curious, downright curious, too, to see how our people have taken to this 'earse. Sometimes, when one of 'em's ill, and it's known he won't get better, they'll talk quite eagerly among themselves as to whose turn it is to follow him as mourners, and what a weight he'd ha' been to carry if the 'earse hadn't been got. You see it's a bit of an out, that's what it is; and now they've something to be proud of; they like funerals, and had rather go to one than stay all day in the house. For there's hardly anything to do in burying an inmate now. Of course they have to carry it from the 'earse to the place where the service is read, and from there to the grave—but that's all; and they're allowed to rest even then. We've a very nice horse that goes out with the bread-van for the out-door relief,

and we just put him into the shafts, and he takes the whole affair to the cemetery without bother or trouble to any one. Would you like to look inside? No? Well, it's very roomy and snug, and is as well finished there as you can see it is from here. No, sir; we never refuse 'em permission to follow, if it's their turn, unless they're too old; and it's wonderful—downright wonderful—how eager some of the very oldest of all are to put on one of the black suits and play at mourners, as you may say. There was an old inmate now, eighty-three, and nearly double with rheumatics. He always insisted on his right to go; and when some of the others said it weren't fair, for he was so slow in walking, they always had to wait for him, and no good either at helping to carry it when in the cemetery grounds; so when, on one terribly wet day, we kept him at home out of kindness, blest if he didn't take it so to heart that he kept his bed. I don't say it killed him, because at eighty-three you don't want to look far for reasons for being carried off; but he never fairly looked up after he wasn't allowed to follow the new 'earse. As for the old man you saw peeling potatoes in the back yard, and whose cough you asked after, he's been just a glutton for funerals ever since the carrying by hand was given up, and I've no hesitation in saying, from what I've seen, that this 'earse is a real comfort, as it ought to be, to every inmate in the house. Is there any feeling of sorrow at losing an old companion, or wish to show respect to his memory by following him to the grave? I should say they don't know what it means. It's just the pleasure of walking behind what they know is a handsome thing, and of getting away for a time from here. For there's not much friendship in workhouses. Paupers aren't like other people, paupers aren't; and there's not much caring for one another when they're once in the house.

"Casual wards? Yes, certainly; you shall see them now. But our guardians, I may tell you, are almost unanimous against tramps, and we've fewer of 'em than any workhouse in the neighbourhood. Why? Because" (triumphantly) "*We give 'em nothing to eat! That's the way, sir, depend on it; and, in my opinion, if tramps weren't fed, there'd be an end of vagrancy. We don't work 'em, mind, or give 'em bedding, or let 'em wash. No, sir. We tried all that sort of newfangled work, and it didn't answer—not it. They'd eat their suppers or their breakfasts fast enough; but when work-time came, they'd rather run away than do it. System of control—labour-master? Bless you, no. We tried 'em with stone-breaking, we tried 'em with oakum-picking, and we tried 'em with carrying water; but they took to none of 'em, and made off every morning, as regular as the clock came round. Not likely to take to it, unless they're made, you say? Give 'em decent beds and bread and gruel, and take care to make 'em work it out the next morning, as is done successfully elsewhere? Why*

should we, when our present plan answers as well as it does? Why, we've fewer tramps in our wards than any of the workhouses near, and why? Just because they ain't coddled here, and don't get fed. Why, sir, if my plan was adopted, I'd back myself to clear the whole country of vagrants in three months. What is my plan? Well, let the unions combine—for it's no use trying it, mind you, unless all act alike—and put out a notice saying that, after a certain date, no tramps will be relieved, on any pretence whatever. Now, I've had a good deal of experience—I have; nine-and-twenty years I've been master here, and I say that if a good white board were put outside every workhouse in England, and this notice written on it in large letters, and acted up to, there'd soon be an end of vagrancy. There should be fair notice given 'em—three months, say; and after that, let 'em look out! What are vagrants? That's what I want to know. Nasty good-for-nothing fellows, who leave their parishes, if they ever had parishes—which is doubtful—and come for help to people who've enough to do with their own poor.

"Have I ever heard of 'A Short Way with Dissenters,' by the man that wrote Robinson Crusoe? No, sir, I can't say I have; but I'd make a precious short way with vagrants, if I'd my will; and I'm certain that, if you don't feed 'em, they won't come. I'm speaking from experience, mind you. Why is it our neighbours get more than we do? Just because they give 'em food, and we don't. However, here we are at the women's tramp-ward; the men's is just like it on the other side, and you can see for yourself how they lie. Straw, sir—good straw, that's all; and I'd like to see the man who'd say it wasn't enough for vagrants. Rugs in cold weather? Clothes to put on, if their own are wet? No, sir, not a scrap; they've got a knack of tearing rugs and clothes—tramps have; and we don't choose to put our union to expense; so they just lay down as they are, or naked, if they like it better, and are got rid of in the morning. Washing-place? God bless you, they're not a washing sort—vagrants aren't, and wouldn't care to use it, if we had. Quarrel or behave badly among themselves? Well, then they'd have to make it up again. *We shouldn't hear them, for this ward, as you may see, is a good way from the house, and they might halloo and screech their hearts out without annoying anybody. But we're never troubled in this way, I assure you; and our vagrants aren't worth speaking of, they're so few since we've treated them properly. Does the Poor Law inspector approve of our sending casuals supperless to bed, and dismissing them breakfastless in the morning? I've no reason to think he doesn't, sir; he's never said so—and he's a very nice gentleman, is our inspector, and much liked by the board. No, sir, not old—about fifty, or thereabouts; but enjoying very bad health, as I believe.*

The reader will have discovered that this

workhouse experience differs from the one recorded last week in every particular but one—the irresponsibility of the discipline and the self-constituted character of the rules. Here, as elsewhere, and we are now on the borders of Cheshire and Staffordshire, having crossed England in our search, the management is of the kind in vogue when the New Poor Law wisacres determined to put down poverty and misfortune thirty years ago, with such modifications and “readings” as perfectly unfettered guardians may devise. The place is beautifully clean, the inmates are tolerably fed, the beds and bedding, day-rooms and sick-wards, are arranged with mathematical precision, and the entire establishment is as sternly repressive and soul-depressing as the most misanthropic could desire. To say the sick are insufficiently cared for, is to repeat that we are in a workhouse; to say that the aged and infirm are left to tend or annoy each other without help or supervision throughout the night, and that the entire establishment does not show a single trace of human interest or fellow-feeling, save the boasted hearse, is to repeat, consistently, that we are in a workhouse. To say that helplessness, misfortune, and infirmity are so many crimes and misdemeanours, is to iterate once more that we are in a workhouse. Yet some of the maladministration within the house seems to arise from sheer wantonness or ignorance, and not from deliberate cruelty, as in the casual wards. Thus, with but ten people ill, and a resident paid nurse to attend to them, we find the door of communication between her room and the male sick ward carefully locked at night, and the medicines administered by a pauper, whose appearance, open-mouthed, hollow-cheeked, and vacant, recalls Smike. He is described as “a very superior young man, who oughtn’t to be in here,” but he stares idiotically when addressed, and says wonderingly, after promptings by the master and coaxings by the nurse, “Yes, sir, I’m wardsman,” in reply to a question as to another pauper’s age! “He’s hard of hearing: that makes him seem stupid,” the master explains; and then, translating a request we have made twice, “Show the gentleman where you sleep, can’t you!” precedes us into a room judiciously divided from the nurse’s by a stone staircase, three thick doors, a substantial flooring, and a lock and key at night. Some old men, who are too far gone in torpidity and old age to even lift their eyes from the fire they gaze into and sit round, an old man in bed, with eyes closed and sheet tucked under chin, in that terribly suggestive fashion which seems common to bed-ridden paupers, and a much younger man, who rises from his chair near the fire to assure us earnestly that he is as well as he could wish, and would like to be let out that minute, make up the party. “Nothing much the matter with any of them,” the nurse explains, nervously plucking at her apron with both fingers, as I have seen witnesses do under cross-examination. “Why does the

doctor put them on the sick-list, then?” “Oh, they’re too old to be good for anything, for the old man in bed is more than ninety, and one of them sitting by the fire is eighty-five. The younger man is always praying, falling down on his knees in the middle of the day, when nobody expects it”—a compliance with the scriptural injunction concerning prayer without ceasing which has landed him in the infirmary ward. “Not very strong in his head,” the master opines; “*though* his father was a mayor, and he has relations well to do, who turned him off because he went speaking of some lawsuit.” Old men, helpless from age and infirmity, together with a man “not strong in the head,” looked after by a deaf wardsman with an impediment in his brain—this picture suggests such frightful possibilities, that we ask, with some particularity, the nurse’s precise duty in regard to them. Indefinite supervision by day, and a generous trustfulness in fate by night, appear to form the code by which that functionary is governed. It is necessary, you see, to lock the door dividing the sick-wards for women from the sick-wards for men; and as the nurse’s room is with the latter, it follows that the deaf wardsman has sole charge during the hours when assistance is needed most. “No, sir, there is no bell, and no way of communicating to me from the ward where the old men are; but the young man has only to get up, and come up those stone stairs at the end of the passage, and then along this corridor, and if he kicks at the locked door at the end of it, my room’s not far off, and I’m sure to hear if anything’s wanted. But it’s very seldom, I assure you, that I’m required. Oh, sir! of course I should get up directly, if he came, and he’d be sure to come if anything was the matter.” We suggest, diffidently, that locking up aged invalids and incapable paupers together, and leaving it to the conscience and judgment of the latter to decide upon the necessity for leaving a warm bed, and traversing a couple of cold corridors and a stone staircase, to kick at a door until a nurse is roused from her bed some yards off, appears a somewhat elaborate form of How not to do it. But both master and nurse are thoroughly convinced that any departure from the present admirable arrangements—bringing into use, for example, some rooms on the same floor as the nurse’s room, in which beds were lying empty, and which have not been used since “the year of the cholera and Irish fever”—would be injudicious and unwise: so we prudently change the subject, and visit the day-room of the old men not on the sick-list. Fireless, comfortless, clean, and cold, and without old men. These are all at work, some in the garden, others about the outhouses; and in one of the latter we come upon a cluster of feeble wretches, some bearded, and either palsied, or shaking with the cold, who are cowering together and coughing against each other this bitter November day, in a place flowing with water, without a fire,

and open to the yard, of which it is a part. The water is not turned on to the brick floor for the sole purpose of giving the dotards cold. Potatoes are being scraped and washed by three or four of the least decrepit, and the others are blinking and winking by their side, because to be sheltered from the biting wind, and to sit down, is less chilling than their other alternative—standing in the open yard. "What is the matter with the old man making the painful noise when he coughs?" "Well, I didn't notice which one it was; but they're all very old, you see, and liable to coughs." Such a row of helpless, hopeless, withered faces! One of them essays to bow cringingly as we enter; but the rest, like their prototypes round the fire in the sick-ward, eye the potato peeling like worn-out puppets, to whom volition or change of gaze is impossible. The majority seem so torpidly inanimate as to be unconscious of all but cold; and there is not one among them to whom a warm room, kind treatment, and what are called "comforts," are not as necessary as food and clothing are to the healthy and strong. To shut those forlorn people out in a flagged exercise-yard, or to leave them neglected in an open out-house, is simply shortening their lives. Looking at them critically, it was difficult to understand how the line of demarcation is drawn between the sick and the infirm. If to need nursing, medical care, and constant warmth, be "sickness" in a parochial sense, assuredly the men before us were sick. Let the guardians who read this paper make a tour of their spick-and-span model workhouse for themselves, and forgetting for a moment the incomparable virtues of whitewash, and the saving grace of cold water, let them, this winter, talk to the old people who are sent out to work, listen to their ailments, and observe their infirmities; and if their experience does not affect the discipline of the place, our faith in the kindness of Cheshire squires is gone. The house is confessedly occupied by the old and worn out. Out of the *one hundred and twenty-three inmates* it contained at our visit, *there were but two able-bodied men*; yet the whole of the vast gloomy place, which has accommodation for double the number there now, is kept in order, and every domestic function discharged, by people who are admitted to be past work. Either, then, the classification is false, or tasks are improperly thrust upon those unable to discharge them; and as we have seen that the house does not suffer, it is tolerably obvious the paupers do. Those dim-eyed, purposeless old men haunt us. We want to master the details of their daily lives, to know the lying down and getting up of people to whom a funeral of one of their number is a treat, and who take a pride in following the ghastly hearse which they themselves are soon to fill.

We hastily ask the master to conduct us to the old men's sleeping-ward, and this is what we see: A long room, light, airy, cold. Beds running down each side, leaving a clear space

in the centre and between each. Floor, white and spotless. Walls without so much as a fly-spot to break their uniformity. Windows facing each other at regular intervals, so as to ensure a thorough supply of keen fresh air. Outside the door, and at the stair-head, is a washing-place, with a copious supply of cold water and a couple of towels, which were clean at our visit, and are changed "when necessary." Here the feeble old men in the potato-shed sleep. The door is locked which communicates with the master and the rest of the house, but they are mercifully allowed free access to the staircase, to the cold water, and the closet. There is no bell or other means of communication; no wardman, no pauper nurses charged with the limited responsibility which it is equally common and wrong to thrust upon them. In this room, which would be excellent for healthy vigorous lads, but is desolately penal for the decrepit wretches sleeping in it, men of seventy, eighty, and ninety spend their nights, unguarded, uncared for, unremembered, until the hour comes for unlocking the door and permitting them to go forth to the yard or potato-shed again. "Is there no one here," we ask, "to act for you in case of accidents? Suppose one of the old men were suddenly taken ill, or had a fit, or were quarrelsome, is there no one in charge?" The workhouse is too well conducted for any possibility of the kind. "Never have any trouble of that sort, I do assure you; and never find it necessary to put any one in charge. Of course the least infirm among them naturally takes the lead; but we've no wardmen, it ain't necessary. As for a fit, or anything being wanted, one of 'em would get up, of course, and come down-stairs and through the other ward, and then knock at the door nearest my room, and I should be sure to hear directly." "Are paupers always ready to help each other? Are there not sometimes bad and intractable characters among them?" "Well, we never meet with any such. All is quiet and orderly when they're once locked up; and as for squabbling or fits, we never have anything of the kind." In short, the arrangements are of the best possible kind; a bell would be a superfluity, and a wardman or night-nurse rather a nuisance to the people than otherwise. Listening to this, and silenced by the courteous firmness with which the master puts us right, we recall an ugly circumstance which happened at Bethnal-green workhouse a couple of years since. In just such a ward as this, aged and infirm men were locked up at night, without fire or light, as here; but with this apparent advantage over their Staffordshire fellows—a pauper wardman had strict orders to call the master if anything went wrong. One night an old man suddenly fell out of bed, and lay somewhat unaccountably on the floor. After a time, one of his neighbours called on the pauper in charge, who, finding him "quite cold," refused to rouse any one unnecessarily for a dead pauper, and, after grumbling at being disturbed, retired comfortably to bed again, and the body was removed in

the morning. Now, a considerable fuss was made concerning this dead pauper and his fate. Journalists said it was cruel to lock up aged helpless people and leave them to each other's tender mercies. The Poor Law Board, ever watchful, considerate, and kind, instituted an official inquiry, and every one concerned was examined and absolved. The master, since dismissed, was rather complimented than otherwise by the local press; the pauper witnesses contradicted each other and themselves, and made their evidence worthless; and after some fitful indignation on the part of the public, discussion, like the poor wretch who occasioned it, died out and was forgotten.

It had been formally shown that it was a mistake to suppose the ward was isolated; for bells, conveniently hung, and of sonorous ringing powers, were shown to be there only a fortnight after the sad event. It happened, however, to the present writer to feel doubtful concerning this pauper's death, and the circumstances surrounding it, and to inspect the ward and examine witnesses for himself, some days before the official inquiry began. Accompanied by a friendly guardian and the rector of the parish, he obtained admission to the workhouse, and examined the ward and pauper death-bed. *The bells were not then put up*, and the condition of things sworn to at the official inquiry proved not to exist. After the untoward death, and its more untoward publicity, efforts were successfully made to smoothe things over; and by the time the official inquiry was held, all the arrangements and everybody concerned were blamelessly immaculate, except the pauper who obstinately fell out of bed and died for want of help. It was the accident of publicity, and the awkward questions it raised, that made bells necessary. Visiting committees of guardians had examined and reported favourably upon the workhouse arrangements every month, and every other precaution had been taken to show that this was one of the many best possible establishments, produced by the best possible system in the best possible of official worlds. The pauper died, questions were asked, and indignation shown; and lo! bells were affixed, and any such wickedness as locking up the aged and infirm without light or fire earnestly and successfully repudiated.

How many paupers die thus from neglect, without discovery? Here, for example, the condition of the poor creatures we have just seen coughing in the cold—worn-out agricultural drudges, who seemed to be mutely asking permission to end their days peacefully and without pain—absolutely demanded warmth and care. Their age and infirmities make night-nursing essential, not merely to their comfort, but to their life; and to shut them up together through the long dark hours, without supervision or help, is to bid them die. Who, knowing anything of workhouse pauper-nature, its callousness, its servility, its cruelty, thinks it likely that there would be any disposition to rouse the master in case of the illness of a mere "inmate"? "No

use disturbing Mr. Blank when the man's feet were quite cold, and he was as good as dead; for Mr. Blank couldn't bring life back again to a dead man, could he now?" was the reason given to us at Bethnal-green for not knocking up the labour-master. And cases are plentiful in which men and women have died through the neglect and indifference of the fellow-paupers entrusted to look after them.

It was a pauper nurse at the Holborn Union workhouse who, on her own responsibility, plunged the dying Timothy Daly into a warm bath on an inclement day in December; and a pauper nurse who improperly applied fuller's-earth to his sores. It was a pauper nurse who, at last, mercifully killed off Richard Gibson, of the St. Giles's Union, by giving him gin; and a pauper wardman who left Robert Scolly to die unaided, on finding "he could not, or would not, answer" when asked whether he were ill. The Poor Law Commissioners, in those consolidated orders which have been so carefully framed, and through the non-enforcement of which so much cruelty and misery is caused, insist that in large workhouses a paid porter shall be employed, as they "believe it to be of a rare occurrence that a pauper can be safely trusted to exercise the power and perform the duties of porter;" and this rule should apply a thousand-fold to all positions demanding delicacy and care. If pauper nurses are as thoroughly inefficient as we have seen, what is to be looked for when there is not even a pretence of deputing duties to any one pauper among the rest? The fate of everybody's business is proverbial; and when, as at the sick and old men's wards just seen, there are passages, and stairs, and wards to be traversed before help can be procured, the fate of an old creature, suddenly smitten in the night, can be easily guessed. He would groan, and be told, surlily, to "make less noise." He would struggle, perhaps, and then become still—with the stillness of death—but unless his condition made him actually disagreeable to the rest, it is childish to suppose any one in the house would be roused. On inquiring of the master as to what would happen if a given case occurred, the invariable, "Well, it never does happen, you see—we never have any trouble of the kind," smoothes over all difficulties. We are asked to assume that old men of eighty are never ill until a Union doctor declares infirmity treatment necessary—that a hard-worked master is personally fond of being roused out of bed at night; that Staffordshire and Cheshire paupers are exceptionally full of the milk of human kindness, and without harshness to each other, or sycophancy to those above them—we are asked to assume any or all of these highly probable contingencies, and, in that case, we need have no fear that the paralytic and infirm are at all likely to be killed off. But, with the harsh coughs and death-like looks of the wretches cowering in the potato-shed still before us, the elaborate cleanliness and bare neatness of

this long chamber jar upon one as much as if it were a living tomb. Nor is there any more trace of its being the home of people with the same wants and feelings as ourselves, than would be found in a row of trestles upon which corpses were to rest. Not a shelf, not a book, not a tray-stand, not a solitary attempt at cheap decoration, relieved the dreary uniformity. It made one's eyes ache to note the comfortless cleanliness of the chilly chamber and the prison-like regularity of the rows of couches. Not a word can be said against the beds, as beds; though the master was "unable to say" whether at this time they accommodated two inmates each, or one. They are clean and fairly comfortable. It is the absence of all human personal interest, of every trace of individuality, which strikes us as repulsively harsh for any but a criminal class. A prison, cleanly, well ventilated, but still a prison, where the inmates are looked after according to fixed rules, and where any yielding to personal tastes, any attempts at rendering the last earthly resting-place of the unfortunate, the broken-down, and the afflicted, home-like, is against the rules—such was our estimate of this dreary establishment. The axiom enunciated at the tramp-ward, "Starve vagrants, and there'll be an end of vagrancy," is paraphrased within the house into, "Withhold necessities from paupers, and you'll make pauperism unpopular." This might be defended, if idle, worthless scamps were battenning upon the poor-rates. In such a case, by all means make their discipline and regimen harsh. Hem them in by rules and regulations, forbid them comforts, and, while finding them with food and shelter, rigorously exact labour in return. And these admissions may be made with the more confidence, when it is remembered that the present inmates are, almost without an exception, declared by the parish authorities themselves to be unfit for work.

The children are at school, and, passing the receiving-ward, we enter a large room where an organ and other fittings show that it serves the double duty of chapel and schoolroom. Both boys and girls are being taught here, under a male and female teacher respectively, and look well fed and happy. There are evidently no undue hardships for them. Their young blood keeps them in a glow in the coldest yard; and as for being locked up in the dark together at night, their only trouble is that the plaguy schoolmaster sleeps in the next room, and has a knack of appearing in his nightgown directly a comfortable pillow fight begins. This is the boys' view, and if field-labour or other out-of-door work could be substituted for this nasty schooling, which never did anybody good yet, and never will, why they would, they think, be tolerably satisfied with their lot. The sacred board-room, with firm-looking chairs, which suggest equal firmness in their users, and a general air of formality judiciously calculated to awe the pauper mind; a board-room, the sole ornament of which is the black harness decorating a corner,

and some framed regulations, signed "Courtenay," for the Poor Law Board, is shown next. This harness hasn't been used yet, and is waiting for the guardians to approve it. "You see, what we had was rather worn when we put it along with such a 'earse"—the master, whose talk is not otherwise cocknified, persists in speaking of the gloomy caravan as if it were the dialect of the Gaels—"such a 'earse as ours is: it looked downright shabby; and so our guardians agreed to have new, for, as I said before, they're kind men, and like to bury their paupers well."

Laundries, admirably arranged, are shown, with hot and cold water laid on to each washing tank. In one, an imbecile female dwarf of sixty is rubbing her brown and wizened bust with soapsuds with a slow deliberate motion, as if trying to remodel it a better colour. She responds to the "Now then, Sally, look sharp!" of the master, by making the most grotesquely hideous grimace it has been our fortune to see save in a gargoyle or a pantomime.

The lavatories are copiously supplied with water and clean towels. We see a bakery next, in which excellent loaves have just left the oven and their tins, and are being ranged in warm brown rows on racks, by a shrewd baker, whose face and clothes are pervaded, like Mr. Tulliver's, with a general meanness. We see the old women's day-rooms, with the infirm inmates dotted about like bundles of old clothes, some gibbering affably to the air, and others self-complacent and gossiping, as dowagers at a five o'clock tea. A table, and the means of sitting down to it, comprise the comforts and amusements provided here for old age. The old women have, however, these advantages over their brethren—the windows of their room look out upon the country, instead of a prison-yard, and they are not turned out of it to mope in the damp between meal-times. The tank at the top of the house, immediately under the latticed lantern window which is so conspicuous an object from the road, and a loft in which the scent from pauper-grown and pauper-gathered onions strongly asserts its equality with onions differently circumstanced, claim our notice next; and we gradually beat back to the room in which we first found the master. Then came a delicate duty—the duty of making our entry in the visitors' book.

Great people—a living duchess and a dead lord, a duke, and an earl's son; philanthropic people—notably a gentleman from Ireland, whose entry was methodically enthusiastic, and who iterated every item of approval like an inspired appraiser; official people—the guardians and the representative of the Poor Law Board—had all concurred in recording their intense admiration of this workhouse and its arrangements. Her grace's comments are mildly rapacious, with an undercurrent of implied feeling that if a harsh fate had not compelled her to be a duchess, she would choose the Elysian life led by the paupers here. The inspector has not a word to say upon the palpable de-

fiance of the law in the tramp-wards, or about the neglect of the sick and old, but has carefully examined workhouse, infirmaries, and arrangements, a few months since, found everything in capital order, and would report "very favourably" to the Poor Law Board; adding, in a consistent postscript, that the ventilation of one ward is "very defective," and that some air-bricks should be put in.

In the face of these glowing statements, it requires some courage to hint, in writing, that, while the able-bodied and the children are well cared for in this workhouse, the arrangements for the aged and sick are susceptible of improvement, and that the practice of starving casual paupers is not in accordance with the requirements of the day. Yet we make bold to do this, in the name of All the Year Round, on the master asking us "to write something in the visitors' book." Whereupon that worthy, obviously staggered at our audacity, promptly changes the subject to "the new earse," which, to his mind, condones all shortcomings, and upon the beauties of which he dilates eloquently until we leave.

THE GREAT MAN-MILLINER.

THE freaks of the present French Empire will fill many a page in the bitter and picturesque history which some future Carlyle will unfold, of the extravagances which led up to a revolution. Gastronomy will always be one of a Frenchman's ideas; but dress must be set down as the pet craze of the Parisian. Common creatures, in other cities, dress to live; but in Paris people live to dress. The coming historian, the man who is to write the new "Tableau de Paris" in imitation of that wonderful diorama of Mercier, will have to deal with the name of a great man-milliner, a wizard of silks and tulle; and while he paints the gambling, and the orgies, and the jockey-clubs, and the duels, and the amazing "coolness of the draperies" on the stage, with the other extraordinary incidents of the Empire, must give a chapter to Worth, the Englishman milliner, who rules fashionable Paris at this moment. His territory is on the first floor, spreading over many spacious rooms. Underneath, a lucky bonnet-maker is allowed to reside, whom the incomparable artist "mentions" when bonnets are wanting. At every hour of the day the carriages of all the highest in Paris are loitering up and down before Worth's door. Their owners are inside, closeted with Worth. Without him no one can be said to be dressed. His touch is everything; and a humble piece of galimatias may be ventured in saying, that "Worth makes the woman, and want of him the fellow." Worth is certainly the prominent figure in the crowd of Pierrots, who are always dancing the great Paris fandango. Thérèse has had her day.

We can conceive, a Frenchman rising to this dizzy height in our country. Nay, it almost follows as of course. In a French modiste, lace-

maker, boot-maker, flower-maker—the nationality is a positive recommendation. But for a Briton to rise to such eminence in the capital of the elegant world, seems astounding. Mr. Worth, it is said, was a humble tailor in some English provincial town; found his way to Paris, and was taken into a shop, on some supposed skill in the "confection" of ladies' riding-habits. For a genius this was an opening. A few clever touches—speaking, of course, in the artistic sense—in this department of confection led to the confection of other things. And let it be considered that this is a matter of minute delicacy; for a habit always fitting close must either make or mar. Other dresses are paintings; a habit is a photograph. The success of the man was astounding. He married a French woman. He has the best staff of assistants that money can procure—but he is the centre of all.

The process is this: Mrs. Jenkinwater, from London, thinks, with a little flutter, she would like a dress, but shrinks in awe from the great attirer of noble people. He would not condescend to take any trouble with so humble a stranger. Perhaps her husband has told her of the great English artist at home, who will not measure any ordinary person unless properly introduced by a customer of distinction. But she is quite in error: the man-milliner professes to know no distinction nor degree. He is open to all, like the law. Mrs. Jenkinwater will have her appointment, possibly, a long way off, like the princess; and must come at a fixed hour, as to a dentist. She is shown into a drawing-room, and to her enters M. Worth, watch in hand. He throws his eye over the lady's figure, and at once "composes a dress." He knows what will suit the face and height. He has, in general, very judicious theories. With some of the magnificent princesses who give him *carte blanche*, he is daring and splendid in his conception. He will build up fabrics which recall the old days of the stage, when Barry and Bellamy moved the tenants of the most gorgeous edifices of brocade, lace, gold, and silver. Richness and costliness characterise his style—velvets embroidered in gold, and covered with lace; sea-green silks loaded with frappant borders of rich colours—a feast to the eye.

Milliners from every decent capital come to wait on Worth. They go away bearing a dress or a pattern, for which they pay fabulous prices. It is not generally known that what are called "peplums" sprang from Worth's brain. To him we owe the tight-fitting jacket—*à l'acrobat*—gorgeous in gold and coloured embroidery, and without sleeves. Mark that touch of genius, for there is as much talent in knowing what to abate as in knowing what to add. A great man, my masters! We may wonder why he shrinks from bonnets, as we might fancy he might open there a vast track of country. I do not think it would be unworthy of his genius, for there is a wild disorder in that department—a tendency to run riot in the matter of hair and flowers. We want a redistribution scheme. The bonnet is being improved off the face of the head—if

we may be pardoned the expression. It is the compound householder, of whom all parties in the State want to get rid. This should be opposed with a firm hand; and I should say Worth is the man to carry a strong, lasting, and satisfactory bill. He affects an Abernethy bluntness and decision. A short, dumpy lady faintly wishes for a deep-green dress. "You would wish to look like an ivy-bush, wouldn't you?" he says, sarcastically. "With all my heart."

An agitated assistant comes in with a message. The countess *knows* she cannot see him; but would he design something?

"What is she like?"

"Sallow, monsieur, tall, and thin."

The artist shades his eyes, thinks a moment, and presently sends out a complete sketch, dress, trimming, everything, which is accepted with gratitude. Even of a famous marquise, perhaps his best customer, he will speak slightly. "She is nothing," he says. "There is no foundation; I have to *reconstruct* her altogether. It is endless trouble, pulling down and building up." This is perfectly true. Such attenuated votaries the priest loads with finery—then piles up the fashionable agony until something substantial has been reared. A petticoat of rich thick white satin, then a skirt of amber satin, groaning under heavy trimmings and festoons, over that a layer of tulle, stiff and glistening with golden flowers and arabesques. Madame's maid is, of course, understood to have done *her* part in "setting" a good concrete foundation. The result is, this lucky artist is making an enormous fortune. The ladies of the Empire are deep in his book. We may suppose the unhappy husbands shut their eyes, and think that shooting the fashionable Niagara is some time off yet.

HISTORY OF A SACK OF CORN.

THIRD CHAPTER.

OUR Irish major, during the dinner given yesterday by the lady of his love, to welcome his auspicious arrival, was told a very singular circumstance. To his immense amazement, he learnt that his fair enslaver, although certainly the lawful widow of one husband, has nevertheless three others all living, in perfect health and spirits. Firstly, she married a French tutor, who became a Moldavian subject to facilitate his espousals; and has since set up a cook-shop. Secondly, she married an ex-cabinet minister, who afterwards desired to unite himself with the political party opposed to her connexions; and arranged an amicable divorce for that purpose. Thirdly, she married a young medical man, who opportunely offered himself for the vacancy, and who had been since ascertained to have two other wives who could establish a prior claim to him. Fourthly and lastly, she married a cousin, to cancel the preceding nuptials; who, subsequently, having been made a colonel in the Turkish contingent, had, in that capacity, unluckily shot himself, in con-

sequence of being unacquainted with the method of loading his pistols.

The strangest thing is, that the three living husbands are all then and there present, and that the major, the fifth Consort Elect, sat down with them and his betrothed to play a game at lansquenet, and very merrily they played it.

While the sharp struggle, however, is going on in the gentleman's mind between his most settled national convictions and his new love, he looks somewhat grave and disconcerted. In this mood he has mounted a stiff Turkish cob and taken a gallop over the moors to escape from his own thoughts. He has not ridden far, when he notices a black-looking object of considerable size floundering about in the principal bog of a disused turf road leading through the widow's estate to her residence. Unconsciously resolving that he will make these roads better when the land comes under his control, he approaches near enough to see that the thing which has attracted his attention is a large travelling britzka, hopelessly stuck in the thick black mud of the quagmire. The disorderly mob of ponies once attached to it, having broken their ropes and got loose, are now standing with drooping heads and reeking flanks close by on firm ground. A person in a nightcap and an enormous black bearskin cloak is gesticulating furiously from one of the smashed windows. As the major comes nearer, he perceives, with some difficulty, that the occupant of the britzka is scolding in a kind of French gibberish and Russian curses, which he remembers to have heard in the Crimea. On trying, therefore, to establish an understanding in the French language, he meets with the most gushing response which can be dictated by joy, gratitude, and fright; and he speedily learns that the alarmed occupant of the bearskin is the cook of a Russian nobleman, who is no other than our fascinating friend Aide-de-camp General his Highness the Prince Dooyoumalsky.

The major is not so overwhelmed with this intelligence as he would have been a few months ago, having observed that nearly all his recent acquaintances are princes, and anticipating that he may be himself exalted to a kind of brevet-rank in that direction by his approaching marriage. Nevertheless, it has its effect; and a Russian prince appears still a man of consequence. The cook has been sent on before, to consult with the chef of Madame the Princess Ooleapeano Zika—in short, his, the major's, own noble and matrimonial widow. Of course, this alters the case entirely; and the major devotes himself at once to the cook's rescue with an energy and success which acquire for him the eternal friendship and gratitude of that great artist. They walk towards the widow's château as fast as circumstances and the bear-skin will permit. They have not progressed very far upon their way, when the usual shrill yelling that announces the coming of a carriage drawn by post-horses in Moldo-Wallachia is heard piercing the air

close behind them. It is my prince, who has already arrived. He puts his gay, handsome head out of the window of his gay, handsome travelling-carriage, and calls cheerily to the cook, in such terms of affectionate banter as a soft-hearted man, with a choice vocabulary of pretty language, might use towards a beautiful woman who had won his heart. The carriage halts to take up the cook, who is loud in the praises of his deliverer. A brief hearty introduction then ensues. It is quite needless; for my prince has instantly guessed that the upright, soldierly, simply-dressed gentleman could be no other than the new dupe he has come into those parts expressly to deceive; but, of course, the gallant major knows nothing of all this. Accordingly, he is quite enchanted with his splendid acquaintance. The prince laughingly explains that the profuse display of stars, crosses, and decorations which cover the breast of his brilliant uniform are merely so many travelling requisites, which add to the comfort and convenience of a journey in Russia, especially where custom-houses and city-gates are concerned. But he himself seems to attach no manner of importance to them, and speaks about the means by which they are acquired, and about Russian affairs generally, from his own point of view, with a captivating absence of all pride and reserve. The Crimea, and the events particularly connected with the siege of Sebastopol, supply a subject of conversation deeply interesting to both officers; and they tell each other several anecdotes of a new and remarkable character, referring to that famous military episode in the history of their respective countries. Their friendship ripens so rapidly, and the topics discussed are of so absorbing a nature, that instead of walking directly towards the fair widow's house, they find themselves, at the end of half an hour, in front of the major's hotel. The prince then declares ("ma foi!") he is too tired to go any further; and the major, with the genial hospitality almost universal among Irishmen, offers to give up his rooms—as they are the best in the house—to his new friend. The prince will not hear of it. He is a soldier, a rough Cossack, he adds, showing a set of very fine teeth, regularly whitened by Rowland's Odonto, or other fashionable nostrum. He is a Tartar, an ontar barbarian. Any cupboard or closet will do to house him. He is accustomed to sleep, wrapped only in his cloak, upon a sofa or two chairs. He is only a little troubled about his people; but Esperance will see to them. Esperance is the Princess Ooleapeano Zika, and Prince Dooyoumalsky explains that he calls her by her christian name because they are first-cousins. The Irish gentleman's heart warms towards him in consequence.

While they are thus gossiping pleasantly, the prince has taken possession of the major's bedroom. He doffs his fine coat, throws it carelessly on the ragged inn sofa, where the diamond orders blaze sparkling against the sunlight, and uses the major's dressing-case with all the affectionate freedom of a brother-officer in the same regiment. In plain truth, it probably

never occurs to either of them that they met for the first time in their lives about an hour ago, so completely can my prince identify himself with any theatrical character it pleases him for the time to perform. He sings with unconscious propriety, as he brushes his hair, Schiller's fine old German robber-song, *Darum frisch Cameraden*; and, when he has done, crosses a chair, and, leaning on the back of it like the jolly good fellow he is, lights a cigarette, and goes in for all sorts of merry confidences. There they sit; the prince, who complains slightly of heat, keeping always near the open window, apparently to caricature the people in the street for the major's amusement, but really with another object, which it may be as well to explain at once, to prevent misunderstandings.

Esperance, Princess of Ooleapeano Zika, is not precisely cousin to my prince. She is cousin to his wife, the extinct lady now ruminating far away in the steppe village. Nevertheless, there was for some years great cordiality between them, till my prince—having secretly and without her knowledge undertaken to obtain a Roman counship for the first husband of that virtuous lady—succeeded in extracting certain blank signatures from him, which ultimately obliged the unsuspecting gentleman to reside for a considerable period in Clichy before he could get quit of them. They were in Paris for their wedding trip at the time, and Clichy was the French prison for debt. In truth, the signatures which the French tutor had been induced to believe necessary to certain documents which the papal court was alleged to require before issuing to him a patent of nobility, had been neither more nor less than certain bills of exchange for large sums of money drawn in the Russian language, ostensibly accepted by him at short dates. This, indeed, had been the primary cause of the separation which had led to the widow's first divorce, she having then discovered, by the frantic abuse of the concierge at the hotel where they were residing, that she had been married under a false name, and that her husband, instead of being a political refugee of the illustrious line of Rohan, as he had represented himself, was no other than the son of a snuffy old portress. Since this curious episode in her domestic life, the Princess Ooleapeano Zika had never heard from her brilliant relative till a few days ago, when the soft-hearted lady received a touching appeal from her cousin (my prince's wife), imploring her to forgive and receive my prince once more. The prince, who wrote this letter himself, and has a shrewd knowledge of the generous nature on which he is playing, certainly hopes for the happiest results; but he cannot be quite certain of them. The mildest of ladies are sometimes resentful when crossed in their love-affairs, and a rebuff from his wealthy kinswoman might now oblige him entirely to alter his tactics and whole plan of campaign. This is why he sits watching at the window. He is anxiously awaiting the arrival of his handsome Circassian attendant, whom he despatched yesterday for an answer to the touching epistolary entreaty

bearing his wife's signature. He has not to wait long for it. The widow is too happy just now, and too naturally sweet-tempered and forgiving at all times, to bear malice. Perhaps she is not at heart indisposed to show this grand Russian relative of her family to her gallant admirer. It is very notable that the inhabitants of the principalities have always a certain respect for the Russians, however queerly they get treated; so she writes upon intensely-scented note-paper, enclosed in an envelope fastened with armorial bearings, upon crimson and gold, this brief welcome:

Vien Vaux Rien.

ESPAIRANCE.

Which shows that the charming and princely widow appears to be in some uncertainty as to the precise orthography of her own name, and therefore may think it best to spell it and other words upon phonetic principles somewhat in advance of the modern state of learning. Well or ill written, however, never were words more welcome than these are to my prince; though, had the honest lady known to what purpose he would use them, she would have cheerfully suffered half a martyrdom rather than be made a mere decoy to cheat a worthy man who loved her.

The letter has an effect perfectly intoxicating upon my prince, when the tall and stately Circassian presents it with humble downcast look and arms folded across his breast. The prince bursts into a French couplet, and jauntily moves towards him with brotherly familiarity. He tells the Irishman that the Circassian is a chief whom he, the prince, was fortunate enough to save in the hot fight when Schamyl was captured; and the faithful, grateful fellow has never left him since. "But," says the prince, with a noble glow on his handsome features, and speaking with eloquent feeling, "we are sworn comrades; I would trust my life in his hands, and we share all things in common." This gives rise to an instructive and delightful talk about the Caucasus, where the prince has often held high command. But before it is ended he starts up and asks permission to put on his fine coat again, as he is bound to dine with his cousin. He is desolated to leave his brave enemy, as he calls the major, in pleasant allusion to old Crimean times; but he is very fond of his relative; she is very fond of him, and she will feel hurt if he does not spare her the only evening he can afford to pass at Ibraïla. Besides, the affectionate lady has just written to say she has got up a party expressly for him. The major now mentions, with some pride, that he also dines with the princess, and is on a footing of respectful intimacy with her highness. The prince is delighted. His eyes twinkle, and he is just going to say something extremely Russian, when he observes the modest and knightly devotion of the British officer's manner, and checks his fluent tongue just in the nick of time, knowing that it sometimes got him into mischief in such cases, when he was somewhat younger.

They go together to the banquet of wine and good things, which the lady has surely prepared

for them; and every other unoccupied and eligible person in the neighbourhood will do the same, all being certain to be welcomed with the frank and lavish hospitality, which is the time-honoured custom of the land.

No gatherings in the world are so agreeable and unembarrassed as social meetings among the Moldo-Wallachians. The company who mean to dine together begin to arrive at any time in the afternoon; and they sit down on comfortable divans, or wander about in the interminable suites of rooms, chatting or flirting together in couples or little groups. They tell stories round the fire. They sing low sweet songs together, sitting cross-legged upon soft carpets. Much of the dreamy poetry of the East lingers among them. Twenty or thirty persons will be thus assembled, all doing what they like best, independent of each other, amidst the perfume of Turkish tobacco from dozens of cigarettes, making a faint cloud or gloaming about the rooms, and the constant gentle hum of friendly voices.

A little group of the widow, the major, and the prince, is soon formed in a convenient corner, and the lady begins singing, with her hand clasped confidently in that of her lover. The prince chimes in a beautiful second; and they sing, and sing, and talk, and smoke, and say genial things, till the Irish gentleman declares his belief that Paradise must have been originally situated on the Banks of the Danube. He is rewarded with a smile that would make the fortune of a whole company of gipsies; and then come lights in noble silver burners, and footmen in splendid liveries, and all the stately parade of Western civilisation. The centre dinner-table is decked out with flowers in the latest style of St. Petersburg, and a side table tempts the most jaded appetite with highly spiced stimulants and those liqueurs for which the good housekeeping of the principality is so justly renowned. Just before dinner, the prince speaks a few Russian words in an earnest manner, and the widow gently beckons her magnificent relative into her boudoir. Then the major, whose eyes seem always forced to follow her as steel follows the loadstone, sees her go to her *escritoire* and unlock it. "Va, Vaux Rien adorable!" says the noble lady, in her slipshod French; and then there is a sound like the clink of ducats in a leathern bag; but the major is a gentleman, and he has moved away so that he cannot hear it. He notes, however, with a slight pang of rising jealousy, perhaps, that when the prince leads his charmer back to the dining-room; he keeps fast hold of her hand, which he covers with kisses, and he pours out such a flood of soft, melodious Wallachian words, all vowels, as makes the widow quite blush with pride and pleasure, though she does turn away and try to get her hand free. The fact is, my prince, seeing how happy she is, and how she has softened towards him, considers such an opportunity far too good to be lost, and has just borrowed a hundred Austrian ducats of her for his present occasions, alleging as a pretext that he is only furnished

with Turkish money, which has no currency in the hospodariat. The widow sees well enough through this neat excuse, and taps him reprovingly with her fan, to let him see she knows he was fibbing. She thinks that she is a match for him now, and that he can deceive her no more. But she lends him the money because she has plenty more, and is by instinct a generous, trustful, pitying woman; well aware how her cousin is pinched there in the wild steppe village. "C'est pour Zoë," she adds, in a voice a little broken; and it is then that my prince seizes her hand and covers it with kisses.

After dinner there is a dance, and as the major does not foot it quite so gaily as his darling, he must resign her now and then to lighter-toed partners who do. This is how my prince gets hold of him, over a cigarette, in the dim conservatory, somewhat out of the way of the revellers. He soon contrives to extract all he did not previously know of the Belfast speculation, and enters into it with a cordiality that wins the major's heart entirely. His military prejudices have not yet quite reconciled themselves to trade; but my prince points out to him that it is the noblest occupation of the human mind—as managed in Russia. He offers, with irresistible frankness, to guide the major's first venture. He foresees that the Irish gentleman's new and brilliant commercial idea will quadruple his, the prince's, income—not that he cares for such considerations, but in a revenue so large as his it is worth attention. Corn may be had for the asking in Russia. Irish linen is a novelty beyond price. He, the prince, has a very large standing crop of wheat within a day's journey; will the major take a seat tomorrow in his britzka and go to look at it, and have a peep at Russia?

"Ah! est-il possible!" cries the princess, shrilly, as she reads the major's passionate note of farewell for three days, the next morning, in bed. "Ah! le scélérat!" she repeats, angrily, knowing my prince, and feeling a sure foreboding of what is to come. But the mischief is done. It was all managed last night as she was dancing the cotillon with the oldest and ugliest partner present. She had generously chosen him in loyalty to her sober lover. That lover is speeding now, with her false cousin, into the trap which has been set for him with such infinite address.

A ROLLING STONE.

WILLIAM BENTON and myself went out to India as fellow-cadets twenty-five years ago. In those days, the overland route was too expensive a road to the East for young fellows just starting in life; and so, like others of our profession and age, we embarked in one of the splendid sailing-vessels which used to proceed round the Cape.

During our passage out to Bengal in the Douglas Castle, Benton and myself occupied

the same cabin, and it is almost impossible that two men should for four months live in a space of ten feet by five without having a fair appreciation of each other's merits and faults. Benton was older than I, generally are when they go out as cadets to India. He had been at college, too, and had graduated; which in those days was almost unheard of for a cadet. When we sailed from England, he must have been about twenty-one years of age, whilst I was barely seventeen, and therefore, as a matter of course, he was the leader in our small community of two. Not that he ever presumed upon his seniority of years, and I am bound to say that the period of our companionship had considerable effect for good upon me. Benton had very strong religious views, but they were of a kind to attract and not repel those to whom he spoke on the subject. He told me that he had originally gone to Oxford with the intention of entering the Church, but that after a couple of years at the university, he found that he could not conscientiously subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles.

After landing at Calcutta, we travelled up country together as far as Cawnpore, which was my destination, Benton then pushing on to his own station, which was about a month's march further on. In the days I speak of there were no railways in India, and even palkee-harries, or carriage-dawks, were as yet unheard of. We had to march up country, doing about fifteen miles each day, and pitching our tents every night. There were some twenty-five or thirty cadets with us, the whole party being in charge of an officer who was appointed to the duty of seeing the young men to their various stations. Benton and myself kept very much together, as we had chummed together on the way out from England. Before leaving Calcutta, we bought one tent between us, and thus an intimacy was kept up until I stopped to join the corps to which I was appointed at Cawnpore, whilst Benton and the rest of the party pushed on for the stations further north. My chum and I parted with mutual regret, but with many promises to write to each other very often—promises which I need hardly say were not kept.

After I had been some twelve months doing duty at Cawnpore, I was surprised one morning very early to see a palankeen, carried by the usual number of bearers, enter my compound. Out of it got my friend Benton, travelling somewhere or other by dawk. He told me that he had resigned the service, and was on his way to Calcutta to embark for Europe, as he was tired of Indian life, and especially of the monotony of cantonments. He had left the corps on the best of terms with everybody in it; but said that he found himself too old to take kindly to soldiering, and had determined to take to something else. He remained a couple of days with me, and then started for Calcutta, with many expressions of good feeling, promising, as before, that whenever his views were settled, he would write and let me know where he could be found.

I was destined not to remain long at Cawnpore. I was regularly posted to a regiment at Calcutta. Between the time when I had last seen Benton and the time I reached the Presidency, a period of nearly twelve months had elapsed. I had heard nothing whatever from him, when one day, much to my surprise, he made his appearance at the door of Spencer's Hotel, where I happened to be standing. He was dressed in the shooting-coat, pith helmet hat, long boots, and all that constitutes the regular garb of an Anglo-Indian, whose time is chiefly given to shooting, and who cares little for the ordinary conventionalities of civilised dress. He told me that, he had never been to England at all, but that, after resigning the service, had embarked a portion of what little money he had in an indigo factory, of which he was now managing partner. From this factory, situated about a hundred miles from Calcutta, he had just ridden in, having placed horses along the road at intervals of ten miles, and got over the ground in about ten hours. He was glad to see me, and insisted upon my paying him a visit at Bovenpore, the name of his factory, as soon as ever I could get leave. We dined together, and I could not help observing how, in one short year, the quiet-mannered college man had become the rough-and-ready, loud-talking indigo-planter. He told me that the constant occupation of his present work, together with the quantity of exercise in the open air which he was obliged to take, made him delighted with his new life, and that he received a considerable amount of interest on the small amount of capital which he had sunk in the concern.

I promised to pay Benton a visit as soon as the cold weather set in, but some weeks before the time when I hoped to fulfil my promise, found me on my way to England, having been very ill, and ordered home as the only chance of recovery. My furlough, or sick certificate, was for three years, and I lost sight of Benton. I had been upwards of a year in London, when, happening to pass through Throgmorton-street one day, I ran up against Benton. But what a change had come over him? The long beard, big boots, linen shooting-jacket, and pith hat, had given way to the ordinary frock-coat, tweed trousers, and black hat of European life, and Benton was now bustling about Capel-court and its neighbourhood as a busy stockbroker. To see him with pencil and book in hand, and the peculiar air which members of "the House" have of ever running a race with time, any one would have thought that to deal in shares and scrip had been his sole occupation from early youth. Soon after I left London, and did not return for a period of six months. I called upon Benton at his lodgings, but found he had left them, and the present occupant did not know his address. Nor could I obtain any information as to his whereabouts in the City, further than he had some two months previously withdrawn his name as a member of the Stock Exchange, and had gone no one knew where. This much I ascertained, that he had not failed in any of his engage-

ments, nor had he left any money matters unsettled.

My three years' sick leave I managed to spin out into four; that is to say, according to a practice common enough in the days of the East India Company, after my furlough was over, I got appointed to do duty at the military college of Addiscombe. At last the time came. I returned through Europe, intending to make my way gradually to Alexandria, and so on, via Cairo and Suez, to India.

After visiting parts of Northern Germany, I made my way, via the Tyrol, Trent, Verona, Bologna, and Florence, to Rome. There an Indian friend whom I met persuaded me not to proceed by the regular beaten track to Naples, but to join him on a riding excursion through parts of Calabria, and to make our way to the capital of what was then the kingdom of the Two Sicilies. My companion was a skilful draughtsman, and at one part of our road we turned some twenty miles out of the way to visit the ruins of an old castle which he wanted to sketch. Night came upon us unawares, and there being no inn of any sort within half a dozen miles, we asked shelter for the night at a neighbouring convent of Capuchin friars. Such humble fare as the fathers had was placed at our disposal, and with a good supper, tolerable wine, and our own store of cigars, we soon began to feel more comfortable than before our meal. When the repast was over, the Padre Guardiano, or superior, joined us; but as we sat talking, he found that our Italian carried us but a very short way in the art of conversation. "Oh," said he, "one of our fathers is your countryman, and will serve as interpreter between us." He then summoned Father Paulo. In a short time Father Paulo appeared, and, notwithstanding his shaven head, long beard, and coarse brown serge dress, no sooner had he opened the door than I at once recognised my old fellow-cadet, Benton.

For some minutes I could hardly speak for astonishment. To find the man whom I had known as an officer in the Indian army, then as an indigo-planter, and subsequently as a stockbroker, now transformed into a Capuchin friar, in one of the remotest corners of Europe, appeared almost incredible. Benton seemed very glad to see me, and we sat up talking for several hours. He told me that he had given up the Stock Exchange because he disliked the never-ending wear and tear of mind and body in the pursuit of Mammon. He had left England with the intention of travelling on the Continent, and by degrees had found his way to Rome. There he had met with two or three old Oxford friends who had joined the Roman Catholic Church, and were now clergymen of it. Either by these gentlemen, or from his own convictions, or perhaps a little of both, Benton had been induced to follow their example. Being a man who never did anything by halves, he became a Capuchin friar, and, after a year of the novitiate, took the final vows.

The order of friars to which he belonged was very severe indeed, but, not content with living in their chief convent at Rome, he had asked to be removed to the strange out-of-the-way place where we met him. He seemed content with his lot, said he did not wish to leave Italy, and declared himself happier as a Capuchin than he had ever been before. We took leave of him the next day, and continued our route to Naples, whence I embarked for Malta, on my road to India.

About three years after my return to India, I was fortunate enough to obtain a staff appointment. On my way up country to join my new station, I passed through Agra, and remained some days at the house of a relative belonging to the Civil Service. One day I was asked by my friends to go with them to a lecture upon native education, which a newly arrived missionary was about to deliver that evening. The lecturer, it was said, belonged to one of the English dissenting sects, and intended to found a mission in some of the villages near Agra, for the purpose of educating the poorer villagers, and converting them to Christianity. It was late when we arrived at the gentleman's house where the lecture was to be held, and the business of the evening had already commenced. For some time I did not pay much attention to what was going on. Being placed rather behind the lecturer, I did not take particular notice of him, until something in his voice and manner made me think I had met him before, and yet for the life of me I could not tell where. But when he happened to turn round, I recognised Benton. The shaven head, the long beard, the coarse gown, were gone; but the man was the same Father Paulo whom I had last seen at the Capuchin convent amongst the mountains of Calabria. When the lecture came to an end, Benton explained that, tired of the subtleties of the Romish Church, he had determined to preach the Gospel to the heathen in the most simple manner possible. Having renounced Romanism, he joined one of the Protestant nonconformist churches, and offered his services as a missionary. After a certain probation, he had been sent out to the Upper Provinces of India, where I so unexpectedly fell in with him.

About three years after, I found myself in London. I had an engagement one day to dine with a friend at Norwood, and, hailing a Hansom, told the driver to take me to the London-bridge station. On alighting and handing the man his fare, I was not a little surprised at his saying, as he took the money, "Thank you, old fellow!" at the same time chuckling, as if enjoying a good joke. At first I felt certain that the man must have been drinking, and congratulated myself upon having escaped the dangers of an upset in a drive through the most crowded parts of the City. But a glance at the fellow's face made me feel certain that I had seen him before, and to make a long story short, here was my old friend Benton—the ex-military man, ex-indigo-planter, ex-Capuchin friar, ex-Protestant mis-

sionary—reduced to driving a cab in the streets of London.

I do not care very much for appearances; but I felt some dislike to entering into a familiar conversation with a cabman at the door of a railway station. Moreover, I had barely time to take my ticket before the train started, so I took out a card, wrote the address of my lodgings upon it, together with the words "Come to see me any evening after ten," and gave it to Benton. I naturally felt not a little curious to know how it was that my former fellow-cadet had fallen so low in the world, and determined to help him, if it lay in my power to do so.

Nor had I long to wait. In a couple of days Benton called, and although his dress bore marks of having seen better days, it was not such as is generally worn by cab-drivers. He told me that having formed certain religious opinions—he did not tell me, nor did I ask him, what they were—he had come to the conclusion that it was his duty to resign all connexion with the Missionary Society, and come home. Once arrived in England, he found that the greater part of what little money he had left, was swallowed up by the bankruptcy of the gentleman to whose hands he had consigned it for investment. His patrimony had never been large, and now, what between his wanderings and his late losses, he had but a couple of hundred pounds left. This he placed at deposit in one of the banks, and in the mean time formed the extraordinary determination to earn money by driving a cab. In his new calling he had now had about six months' experience, and was already heartily tired of it. Having no acquaintance whatever in London, he was at a loss how to obtain any employment, and begged me to do what I could to get him a situation, no matter how humble. By a fortunate chance I heard of a vacancy in the office of a friend, and procured it for Benton at a weekly salary of three pounds. At this piece of good fortune he appeared quite delighted, and said that for the present his wanderings would be at an end, as with a hundred and fifty pounds per annum he could maintain himself with comfort. Benton wrote a good hand, was an excellent accountant, and spoke more than one modern language well, so that I hoped it would not be long before he got a better salary. In fact, before I left England his employer had promoted him to a situation in which he got two hundred a year, and I felt certain that if he could only conquer his restless disposition, there was yet some hopes of his getting on in life.

About this time the Crimean war broke out, and, like many other Indian officers, I volunteered to join the Anglo-Turkish Contingent then in the course of formation at Shumla. In due time I received a notification that I was named adjutant of a Bashi-Bazouk corps, and at once started on my way to the East. On landing at Constantinople, I of course made my way to that harbour of refuge for wandering Englishmen, Misseri's Hotel. As I entered the house, and was endeavouring by my blandest of manners

to overcome the surly churlishness of that most sulky host (who really seems always determined to try how much he can insult and annoy those who seek a lodging in his fifth-rate caravanserai), I heard my name called, and, turning round, beheld once more my friend Benton, but this time resplendent in one of those fancy-chess-like uniforms, which the English officers of the Turkish legion appeared at all times to delight in. On his head was a helmet of the shape worn by the Life Guards, but in colour and in material like unto those shaved white felt hats which all classes of Englishmen affect so much in the summer time. On the top of this astounding head-dress was a red horsehair plume, whilst the most splendid of gold laced pouch and sword-belts, the hugest of jack-boots, the most sounding of large spurs, and the heaviest of cavalry swords, completed his costume and accoutrements. Very different indeed was the dress and belongings of the warrior before me to those of the man who a few weeks before had driven me to the London-bridge station in a Hansom cab.

We sat next to each other at the table d'hôte the same evening, when Benton told me that whilst a clerk, reading in the papers that a legion was forming for service against the Russians, he at once applied for a commission in the corps. Although he had served but a short time in the Indian army, his testimonials were good, and he had found no difficulty in obtaining an appointment. A friendly loan office, on condition of insuring his life, had offered to lend him money enough to purchase the needful uniforms, and a portion of this he had invested in the gorgeous war-paint in which I met him. Like many others who went to the Crimea at that time, Benton thought that the war with Russia would last as long as the Seven Years' War, if not longer, and that all who drew swords for the Turkish cause were certain of honour, promotion, and prize money, and Heaven knows what besides. It was amusing to see how many pure John Bulls in that ill-omened corps which was officered by Englishmen, believed that they only had to survive the fighting, and learn the Turkish language, in order to be advanced to any post they might desire in the Ottoman Empire, and to roll in wealth for the rest of their natural lives.

Benton, it so turned out, was one of the few fortunate men in the unfortunate band of officers who went to the East in the Anglo-Turkish Contingent. From the very first he held appointments which were well paid, and, notwithstanding the quarrelling which distinguished the proceedings of the leaders in the force, he so managed his affairs as to be always on the winning side. We happened to be posted to different regiments, but I saw enough of him to believe that he was at last in a position which he liked, and which would keep him from wandering in the future. But I was again wrong. Before peace was proclaimed, Benton had become tired of the country,

the people, the contingent, the cause he was fighting for, and all belonging to the war. After hesitating for some time, his final resolve appeared to be come at in a hurry. One evening at Shumla I heard that he had resigned his commission, and the next morning he appeared at my quarters to bid me a hurried adieu, as he was just starting for Constantinople, on his way home.

The Crimean war had come to an end, I had rejoined my corps in India, had again visited England, and had once more gone eastward to take part in that fearful struggle, the mutiny of 1857. Wounded, ill, and out of spirits, I at last obtained leave to resign the service, and was slowly making my way homewards through the Continent, when I stopped for a few days at Paris, on my road to England. Resolved to dine well, and to make some amends to my stomach for all the bad food it had put up with during the last few years, I was seated at a table in the Café de Paris, endeavouring to make out what English news I was in arrears from the columns of Galignani. Behind me was a noisy party of six, composed partly of English, and partly of Frenchmen. They were speculators—stock-jobbers, or men who worked the oracle on the Bourse—and both from their high spirits, and the expensive wines and dishes they ordered, it was easy to perceive that they had latterly been fortunate in their ventures. From time to time I could hear one voice amongst the rest that seemed familiar to me, but it was only when the party had all risen with the intention of taking their coffee outside, that, as they passed me, I discovered Benton. We recognised each other at the same moment, and he seemed delighted to meet me again, although the style of his dress, the magnificence of his chains, rings, and diamond shirt-buttons, made me almost discredit the evidence of my own eyes. He had been for the last two years a financial agent, and had made a great deal of money, both in London and Paris. I found my old friend installed in a magnificent bachelor's apartment in the Rue de Rivoli, with furniture which he told me was his own, and which must have cost not less than a couple of thousand pounds. When I arrived, he was seated at breakfast, although it was nearly twelve o'clock, and the plate, china, and glass on his table was such as neither Padre Paulo, the Agra missionary, nor the officer of the Turkish Contingent—to say nothing of the London cab-driver—could have ever hoped to possess.

My friend's rise to wealth appeared, from what he told me, to have been rapid. He had begun with less than nothing, for he owed some few hundred pounds. Commencing with trifling purchases of shares, he went on incurring greater risks, which, however, invariably increased his wealth. He was now a rich man. In appearance, dress, ornaments, and even in manner, he was quite a Frenchman, but a Frenchman of a bad school, and very vulgar withal. I thought, on looking at him, that I had greatly preferred Benton in his poverty, even when he

drove the Hansom cab in London for his daily bread.

During my short sojourn in Paris, I saw but little of my former friend. I dined with him one day at the Café de Paris, and he partook of what hospitality I could offer him at the Hôtel des Princes. But, although so long known to each other, we felt that we could be now less intimate than ever, and neither of us seemed inclined to renew the terms on which we were before. When we parted, it was with little regret on either side. As I steamed away in the train for Calais, I wondered to myself whether we should ever meet again, and, if so, where that meeting would be.

It took place within a twelvemonth. I had kept up when in England my old Indian custom of taking a constitutional walk before breakfast. One summer morning I had wandered very early into Hyde Park, and stood looking at a battalion of the Guards going through their drill. On such occasions there are always more or less men of the vagabond order present, many of them having used the benches of the Park for their beds during the night. An individual of this kind—a man in rags, without a hat on his head, and his scanty torn coat showing he had no shirt—asked me for alms. Without looking at his face I gave him a sixpence, when he, as if involuntarily, pronounced my name. I turned round, and beheld Benton. I gave him what money I had in my purse, told him to get food and decent clothes forthwith, and where he could hear of me. He went his way, and two days later called on me at my club, with respectable clothes on, and looking, if not well, at any rate very much better than when I had seen him in the Park.

His was merely a repetition of the old old story: Money quickly got, quickly spent. In no place can riches be made to vanish with greater celerity than in Paris. Gay suppers, card-parties, betting, which was certainly not limited, and other nameless means of helping him to spend his money, together, very soon eased poor Benton of what he had above the world. A run of unfortunate speculations hastened his downfall, and to avoid being arrested for debt he fled from France. When he reached London the sum total of his wealth amounted to less than fifty pounds, and with the habits of self-indulgence which he had contracted, this money had hardly lasted him a month. Little by little he had pawned watch, rings, trinkets, and lastly clothes, until he was left with barely a decent suit to his back, or a change of linen in his possession. By degrees even these he had parted with, until he was left without the means to pay for a meal. When I met him, he had slept for a week in a tramps' lodging-

house, and had scarcely tasted food for twenty-four hours.

The question now was, how to provide for this unfortunate man, or where to find him what would keep him from the workhouse. Relatives or friends he had none whatever. My own means would not afford me the wherewithal of supporting my vagabond friend, and yet it was impossible to leave him to starve. For nearly four months I supplied him with a pound a week, and to do him justice he paid his way honestly with this small sum. Amongst my Indian acquaintances I got up a small subscription, which enabled us to provide Benton with a couple of suits of clothes, and after a great deal of trouble we managed to obtain him a situation on a branch railway in the north of England as ticket-collector. The salary he got was only thirty-five shillings a week, but after all he had passed through, we thought that he would not for the present attempt to revert to his former wanderings.

But who can control the movements of a man who has the soul of an Arab? Three months after we thought that Benton had at last settled down for life, he had left his situation, and gone to the prairies of South America with a hunting party of English gentlemen who wanted a servant well acquainted with the best modes of keeping fowling-pieces in order. Since that he has found his way northward to California, and from that by ship to Australia. Last week I had a letter from him saying that he was now keeping a general store near some newly discovered gold-fields in the colony of Victoria. I dare say he will turn up in London before long.

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THE OVERTURE.

DAY of the month and year, November the thirtieth, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-five. London Time by the great clock of Saint Paul's, ten at night. All the lesser London churches strain their metallic throats. Some, flippantly begin before the heavy bell of the great cathedral; some, tardily begin three, four, half a dozen, strokes behind it; all are in sufficiently near accord, to leave a resonance in the air, as if the winged father who devours his children, had made a sounding sweep with his gigantic scythe in flying over the city.

What is this clock lower than most of the rest, and nearer to the ear, that lags so far behind to-night as to strike into the vibration alone? This is the clock of the Hospital for Foundling Children. Time was, when the Foundlings were received without question in a cradle at the gate. Time is, when inquiries are made respecting them, and they are taken as by favour from the mothers who relinquish all natural knowledge of them and claim to them for evermore.

The moon is at the full, and the night is fair with light clouds. The day has been otherwise than fair, for slush and mud, thickened with the droppings of heavy fog, lie black in the streets. The veiled lady who flutters up and down near the postern-gate of the Hospital for Foundling Children has need to be well shod to-night.

She flutters to and fro, avoiding the stand of hackney-coaches, and often pausing in the shadow of the western end of the great quadrangle wall, with her face turned towards the gate. As above her there is the purity of the moonlit sky, and below her there are the defilements of the pavement, so may she, haply, be divided in her mind between two vistas of reflection or experience? As her footprints crossing and recrossing one

another have made a labyrinth in the mire, so may her track in life have involved itself in an intricate and unravellable tangle?

The postern-gate of the Hospital for Foundling Children opens, and a young woman comes out. The lady stands aside, observes closely, sees that the gate is quietly closed again from within, and follows the young woman.

Two or three streets have been traversed in silence before she, following close behind the object of her attention, stretches out her hand and touches her. Then the young woman stops and looks round, startled.

"You touched me last night, and, when I turned my head, you would not speak. Why do you follow me like a silent ghost?"

"It was not," returned the lady, in a low voice, "that I would not speak, but that I could not when I tried."

"What do you want of me? I have never done you any harm?"

"Never."

"Do I know you?"

"No."

"Then what can you want of me?"

"Here are two guineas in this paper. Take my poor little present, and I will tell you."

Into the young woman's face, which is honest and comely, comes a flush as she replies: "There is neither grown person nor child in all the large establishment that I belong to, who hasn't a good word for Sally. I am Sally. Could I be so well thought of, if I was to be bought?"

"I do not mean to buy you; I mean only to reward you very slightly."

Sally firmly, but not ungently, closes and puts back the offering hand. "If there is anything I can do for you, ma'am, that I will not do for its own sake, you are much mistaken in me if you think that I will do it for money. What is it you want?"

"You are one of the nurses or attendants at the Hospital, I saw you leave to-night and last night."

"Yes, I am. I am Sally."

"There is a pleasant patient in your face which makes me believe that very young children would take readily to you."

"God bless 'em! So they do."

The lady lifts her veil, and shows a face no older than the nurse's. A face far more refined and capable than hers, but wild and worn with sorrow.

"I am the miserable mother of a baby lately received under your care. I have a prayer to make to you."

Instinctively respecting the confidence which has drawn aside the veil, Sally—whose ways are all ways of simplicity and spontaneity—replaces it, and begins to cry.

"You will listen to my prayer?" the lady urges. "You will not be deaf to the agonised entreaty of such a broken suppliant as I am?"

"O dear, dear, dear!" cries Sally. "What shall I say, or can I say! Don't talk of prayers. Prayers are to be put up to the Good Father of All, and not to nurses and such. And there! I am only to hold my place for half a year longer, till another young woman can be trained up to it. I am going to be married. I shouldn't have been out last night, and I shouldn't have been out to-night, but that my Dick (he is the young man I am going to be married to) lies ill, and I help his mother and sister to watch him. Don't take on so, don't take on so!"

"O good Sally, dear Sally," moans the lady, catching at her dress entreatingly. "As you are hopeful and I am hopeless; as a fair way in life is before you, which can never, never, be before me; as you can aspire to become a respected wife, and as you can aspire to become a proud mother; as you are a living loving woman, and must die; for God's sake hear my distracted petition!"

"Deary, deary, deary ME!" cries Sally, her desperation culminating in the pronoun, "what am I ever to do? And there! See how you turn my own words back upon me. I tell you I am going to be married, on purpose to make it clearer to you that I am going to leave, and therefore couldn't help you if I would, Poor Thing, and you make it seem to my own self as if I was cruel in going to be married and not helping you. It ain't kind. Now, is it kind, Poor Thing?"

"Sally! Hear me, my dear. My entreaty is for no help in the future. It applies to what is past. It is only to be told in two words."

"There! This is worse and worse," cries Sally, "supposing that I understand what two words you mean."

"You do understand. What are the names they have given my poor baby? Ask no more than that. I have read of the customs of the place. He has been christened in the chapel, and registered by some surname in the book. He was received last Monday evening. What have they called him?"

Down upon her knees in the foul mud of the by-way into which they have strayed—an empty street without a thoroughfare, giving on the dark gardens of the Hospital—the lady would drop in her passionate entreaty, but that Sally prevents her.

"Don't! Don't! You make me feel as if I was setting myself up to be good. Let me look in your pretty face again. Put your two hands in mine. Now, promise. You will never ask me anything more than the two words?"

"Never! Never!"

"You will never put them to a bad use, if I say them?"

"Never! Never!"

"Walter Wilding."

The lady lays her face upon the nurse's breast, draws her close in her embrace with both arms, murmurs a blessing and the words, "Kiss him for me!" and is gone.

Day of the month and year, the first Sunday in October, one thousand eight hundred and forty-seven. London Time by the great clock of Saint Paul's, half-past one in the afternoon. The clock of the Hospital for Foundling Children is well up with the Cathedral to-day. Service in the chapel is over, and the Foundling children are at dinner.

There are numerous lookers-on at the dinner, as the custom is. There are two or three governors, whole families from the congregation, smaller groups of both sexes, individual stragglers of various degrees. The bright autumnal sun strikes freshly into the wards; and the heavy-framed windows through which it shines, and the panelled walls on which it strikes, are such windows and such walls as pervade Hogarth's pictures. The girls' refectory (including that of the younger children) is the principal attraction. Neat attendants silently glide about the orderly and silent tables; the lookers-on move or stop as the fancy takes them; comments in whispers on face such a number from such a window are not unfrequent; many of the faces are of a character to fix attention. Some of the visitors from the outside public are accustomed visitors. They have established a speaking acquaintance with the occupants of particular seats at the tables, and halt at those points to bend down and say a word or two. It is no disparagement to their kindness that those points are generally points where personal attractions are. The monotony of the long spacious rooms and the double lines of faces, is agreeably relieved by these incidents, although so slight.

A veiled lady, who has no companion, goes among the company. It would seem that curiosity and opportunity have never brought her there before. She has the air of being a little troubled by the sight, and, as she goes the length of the tables, it is with a hesitating step and an uneasy manner. At length she comes to the refectory of the boys. They are so much

less popular than the girls that it is bare of visitors when she looks in at the doorway.

But just within the doorway, chances to stand, inspecting, an elderly female attendant: some order of matron or housekeeper. To whom the lady addresses natural questions: As, how many boys? At what age are they usually put out in life? Do they often take a fancy to the sea? So, lower and lower in tone until the lady puts the question: "Which is Walter Wilding?"

Attendant's head shaken. Against the rules.

"You know which is Walter Wilding?"

So keenly does the attendant feel the closeness with which the lady's eyes examine her face, that she keeps her own eyes fast upon the floor, lest by wandering in the right direction they should betray her.

"I know which is Walter Wilding, but it is not my place, ma'am, to tell names to visitors."

"But you can show me without telling me."

The lady's hand moves quietly to the attendant's hand. Pause and silence.

"I am going to pass round the tables," says the lady's interlocutor, without seeming to address her. "Follow me with your eyes. The boy that I stop at and speak to, will not matter to you. But the boy that I touch, will be Walter Wilding. Say nothing more to me, and move a little away."

Quickly acting on the hint, the lady passes on into the room, and looks about her. After a few moments, the attendant, in a staid, official way, walks down outside the line of tables commencing on her left hand. She goes the whole length of the line, turns, and comes back on the inside. Very slightly glancing in the lady's direction, she stops, bends forward, and speaks. The boy whom she addresses, lifts his head and replies. Good humouredly and easily, as she listens to what he says, she lays her hand upon the shoulder of the next boy on his right. That the action may be well noted, she keeps her hand on the shoulder while speaking in return, and pats it twice or thrice before moving away. She completes her tour of the tables, touching no one else, and passes out by a door at the opposite end of the long room.

Dinner is done, and the lady, too, walks down outside the line of tables commencing on her left hand, goes the whole length of the line, turns, and comes back on the inside. Other people have strolled in, fortunately for her, and stand sprinkled about. She lifts her veil, and, stopping at the touched boy, asks how old he is?

"I am twelve, ma'am," he answers, with his bright eyes fixed on hers.

"Are you well and happy?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"May you take these sweetmeats from my hand?"

"If you please to give them to me."

In stooping low for the purpose, the lady touches the boy's face with her forehead and with her hair. Then, lowering her veil again, she passes on, and passes out without looking back.

ACT I.

THE CURTAIN RISES.

In a court-yard in the City of London, which was No Thoroughfare either for vehicles or foot-passengers; a court-yard diverging from a steep, a slippery, and a winding street connecting Tower-street with the Middlesex shore of the Thames; stood the place of business of Wilding and Co. Wine Merchants. Probably, as a jocosse acknowledgment of the obstructive character of this main approach, the point nearest to its base at which one could take the river (if so inodorously minded) bore the appellation Break-Neck-Stairs. The court-yard itself had likewise been descriptively entitled in old time, Cripple Corner.

Years before the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-one, people had left off taking boat at Break-Neck-Stairs, and watermen had ceased to ply there. The slimy little causeway had dropped into the river by a slow process of suicide, and two or three stumps of piles and a rusty iron mooring-ring were all that remained of the departed Break-Neck glories. Sometimes, indeed, a laden coal barge would bump itself into the place, and certain laborious heavers, seemingly mud-engendered, would arise, deliver the cargo in the neighbourhood, shove off, and vanish; but at most times the only commerce of Break-Neck-Stairs arose out of the conveyance of casks and bottles, both full and empty, both to and from the cellars of Wilding and Co. Wine Merchants. Even that commerce was but occasional, and through three-fourths of its rising tides the dirty indecorous drab of a river would come solitarily oozing and lapping at the rusty ring, as if it had heard of the Doge and the Adriatic, and wanted to be married to the great conservator of its filthiness, the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor.

Some two hundred and fifty yards on the right, up the opposite hill (approaching it from the low ground of Break-Neck-Stairs) was Cripple Corner. There was a pump in Cripple Corner, there was a tree in Cripple Corner. All Cripple Corner belonged to Wilding and Co. Wine Merchants. Their cellars burrowed under it, their mansion towered over it. It really had been a mansion in the days when merchants inhabited the City, and had a ceremonious shelter to the doorway without visible support, like the sounding-board over an old pulpit. It had also a number of long narrow strips of window, so disposed in its grave brick front as to render it symmetrically ugly. It had also on its roof, a cupola with a bell in it.

"When a man at five-and-twenty can put his hat on, and can say 'this hat covers the owner of this property and of the business which is transacted on this property,' I consider, Mr. Bintrey, that, without being boastful, he may be allowed to be deeply thankful. I don't know how it may appear to you, but so it appears to me."

Thus Mr. Walter Wilding to his man of law, in his own counting-house; taking his hat down from its peg to suit the action to the word, and

hanging it up again when he had done so, not to overstep the modesty of nature.

An innocent, open-speaking, unused-looking man, Mr. Walter Wilding, with a remarkably pink and white complexion, and a figure much too bulky for so young a man, though of a good stature. With crispy curling brown hair, and amiable bright blue eyes. An extremely communicative man: a man with whom loquacity was the irrestrainable outpouring of contentment and gratitude. Mr. Bintrey, on the other hand, a cautious man with twinkling beads of eyes in a large overhanging bald head, who inwardly but intensely enjoyed the comicality of openness of speech, or hand, or heart.

"Yes," said Mr. Bintrey. "Yes. Ha, ha!"

A decanter, two wine-glasses, and a plate of biscuits, stood on the desk.

"You like this forty-five year old port wine?" said Mr. Wilding.

"Like it?" repeated Mr. Bintrey. "Rather, sir!"

"It's from the best corner of our best forty-five year old bin," said Mr. Wilding.

"Thank you, sir," said Mr. Bintrey. "It's most excellent."

He laughed again, as he held up his glass and ogled it, at the highly ludicrous idea of giving away such wine.

"And now," said Wilding, with a childish enjoyment in the discussion of affairs, "I think we have got everything straight, Mr. Bintrey."

"Everything straight," said Bintrey.

"A partner secured—"

"Partner secured," said Bintrey.

"A housekeeper advertised for—"

"Housekeeper advertised for," said Bintrey, "apply personally at Cripple Corner, Great Tower-street, from ten to twelve—to-morrow, by-the-by."

"My late dear mother's affairs wound up—"

"Wound up," said Bintrey.

"And all charges paid."

"And all charges paid," said Bintrey, with a chuckle: probably occasioned by the droll circumstance that they had been paid without a hassle.

"The mention of my late dear mother," Mr. Wilding continued, his eyes filling with tears and his pocket-handkerchief drying them, "unmans me still, Mr. Bintrey. You know how I loved her; you (her lawyer) know how she loved me. The utmost love of mother and child was cherished between us, and we never experienced one moment's division or unhappiness from the time when she took me under her care. Thirteen years in all! Thirteen years under my late dear mother's care, Mr. Bintrey, and eight of them her confidentially acknowledged son! You know the story, Mr. Bintrey, who but you, sir!" Mr. Wilding sobbed and dried his eyes, without attempt at concealment, during these remarks.

Mr. Bintrey enjoyed his comical port, and said, after rolling it in his mouth: "I know the story."

"My late dear mother, Mr. Bintrey," pursued the wine-merchant, "had been deeply deceived, and had cruelly suffered. But on that subject my late dear mother's lips were for ever sealed. By whom deceived, or under what circumstances, Heaven only knows. My late dear mother never betrayed her betrayer."

"She had made up her mind," said Mr. Bintrey, again turning his wine on his palate, "and she could hold her peace." An amused twinkle in his eyes pretty plainly added—"A devilish deal better than *you* ever will!"

"Honour," said Mr. Wilding, sobbing as he quoted from the Commandments, "'thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land.' When I was in the Foundling, Mr. Bintrey, I was at such a loss how to do it, that I apprehended my days would be short in the land. But I afterwards came to honour my mother deeply, profoundly. And I honour and revere her memory. For seven happy years, Mr. Bintrey," pursued Wilding, still with the same innocent catching in his breath, and the same unabashed tears, "did my excellent mother article me to my predecessors in this business, Pebbleson Nephew. Her affectionate forethought likewise apprenticed me to the Vintners' Company, and made me in time a Free Vintner, and—and—everything else that the best of mothers could desire. When I came of age, she bestowed her inherited share in this business upon me; it was her money that afterwards bought out Pebbleson Nephew, and painted in Wilding and Co.; it was she who left me everything she possessed, but the mourning ring you wear. And yet, Mr. Bintrey," with a fresh burst of honest affection, "she is no more. It is little over half a year since she came into the Corner to read on that door-post with her own eyes, WILDING AND CO. WINE MERCHANTS. And yet she is no more!"

"Sad. But the common lot, Mr. Wilding," observed Bintrey. "At some time or other we must all be no more." He placed the forty-five year old port wine in the universal condition, with a relishing sigh.

"So now, Mr. Bintrey," pursued Wilding, putting away his pocket-handkerchief, and smoothing his eyelids with his fingers, "now that I can no longer show my love and honour for the dear parent to whom my heart was mysteriously turned by Nature when she first spoke to me, a strange lady, I sitting at our Sunday dinner-table in the Foundling, I can at least show that I am not ashamed of having been a Foundling, and that I, who never knew a father of my own, wish to be a father to all in my employment. Therefore," continued Wilding, becoming enthusiastic in his loquacity, "therefore, I want a thoroughly good housekeeper to undertake this dwelling-house of Wilding and Co. Wine Merchants, Cripple Corner, so that I may restore in it some of the old relations betwixt employer and employed! So that I may live in it on the spot where my money is made! So that I may daily sit at the head of the table at which the people in my employment eat together, and may

eat of the same roast and boiled, and drink of the same beer! So that the people in my employment may lodge under the same roof with me! So that we may one and all—I beg your pardon, Mr. Bintrey, but that old singing in my head has suddenly come on, and I shall feel obliged if you will lead me to the pump.”

Alarmed by the excessive pinkness of his client, Mr. Bintrey lost not a moment in leading him forth into the court-yard. It was easily done, for the counting-house in which they talked together opened on to it, at one side of the dwelling-house. There, the attorney pumped with a will, obedient to a sign from the client, and the client laved his head and face with both hands, and took a hearty drink. After these remedies, he declared himself much better.

“Don’t let your good feelings excite you,” said Bintrey, as they returned to the counting-house, and Mr. Wilding dried himself on a jack-towel behind an inner door.

“No, no. I won’t,” he returned, looking out of the towel. “I won’t. I have not been confused, have I?”

“Not at all. Perfectly clear.”

“Where did I leave off, Mr. Bintrey?”

“Well, you left off—but I wouldn’t excite myself, if I was you, by taking it up again just yet.”

“I’ll take care. I’ll take care. The singing in my head came on at where, Mr. Bintrey?”

“At roast, and boiled, and beer,” answered the lawyer, prompting—“lodging under the same roof—and one and one and all—”

“Ah! And one and all singing in the head together—”

“Do you know I really *would not* let my good feelings excite me, if I was you,” hinted the lawyer again, anxiously. “Try some more pump.”

“No occasion, no occasion. All right, Mr. Bintrey. And one and all forming a kind of family! You see, Mr. Bintrey, I was not used in my childhood to that sort of individual existence which most individuals have led, more or less, in their childhood. After that time I became absorbed in my late dear mother. Having lost her, I find that I am more fit for being one of a body than one by myself one. To be that, and at the same time to do my duty to those dependent on me, and attach them to me, has a patriarchal and pleasant air about it. I don’t know how it may appear to you, Mr. Bintrey, but so it appears to me.”

“It is not I who am all-important in the case, but you,” returned Bintrey. “Consequently, how it may appear to me, is of very small importance.”

“It appears to *me*,” said Mr. Wilding, in a glow, “hopeful, useful, de-lightful!”

“Do you know,” hinted the lawyer again, “I really would not ex—”

“I am not going to. Then there’s Handel.”

“There’s who?” asked Bintrey.

“Handel, Mozart, Haydn, Kent, Purcell, Doctor Arne, Greene, Mendelssohn. I know

the choruses to those anthems by heart. Foundling Chapel Collection. Why shouldn’t we learn them together!”

“Who learn them together?” asked the lawyer, rather shortly.

“Employer and employed.”

“Aye, aye!” returned Bintrey, mollified; as if he had half expected the answer to be, Lawyer and client. “That’s another thing.”

“Not another thing, Mr. Bintrey! The same thing. A part of the bond among us. We will form a Choir in some quiet church near the Corner here, and, having sung together of a Sunday with a relish, we will come home and take an early dinner together with a relish. The object that I have at heart now, is to get this system well in action without delay, so that my new partner may find it founded when he enters on his partnership.”

“All good be with it!” exclaimed Bintrey, rising. “May it prosper! Is Joey Ladle to take a share in Handel, Mozart, Haydn, Kent, Purcell, Doctor Arne, Greene, and Mendelssohn?”

“I hope so.”

“I wish them all well out of it,” returned Bintrey, with much heartiness. “Good-bye, sir.”

They shook hands and parted. Then (first knocking with his knuckles for leave) entered to Mr. Wilding, from a door of communication between his private counting-house and that in which his clerks sat, the Head Cellarman of the cellars of Wilding and Co. Wine Merchants, and erst Head Cellarman of the cellars of Pebbleson Nephew. The Joey Ladle in question. A slow and ponderous man, of the drayman order of human architecture, dressed in a corrugated suit and bibbed apron, apparently a composite of door-mat and rhinoceros-hide.

“Respecting this same boarding and lodging, Young Master Wilding,” said he.

“Yes, Joey?”

“Speaking for myself, Young Master Wilding—and I never did speak and I never do speak for no one else—I don’t want no boarding nor yet no lodging. But if you wish to board me and to lodge me, take me. I can peck as well as most men. Where I peck, ain’t so high a object with me as What I peck. Nor even so high a object with me as How Much I peck. Is all to live in the house, Young Master Wilding? The two other cellar-men, the three porters, the two ‘prentices, and the odd men?”

“Yes. I hope we shall all be an united family, Joey.”

“Ah!” said Joey. “I hope they may be.”

“They? Rather say we, Joey.”

Joey Ladle shook his head. “Don’t look to me to make we on it, Young Master Wilding, not at my time of life and under the circumstances which has formed my disposition. I have said to Pebbleson Nephew many a time, when they have said to me, ‘Put a livelier face upon it, Joey’—I have said to them, ‘Gentlemen, it is all very well for you that has been accustomed to take your wine into your systems

by the convivial channel of your throattles, to put a lively face upon it; but," I says, "I have been accustomed to take *my* wine in at the pores of the skin, and, took that way, it acts different. It acts depressing. It's one thing, gentlemen," I says to Pebbleson Nephew, "to charge your glasses in a dining-room with a Hip Hurrah and a Jolly Companions Every One, and it's another thing to be charged yourself, through the pores, in a low dark cellar and a mouldy atmosphere. It makes all the difference betwixt bubbles and vapours," I tells Pebbleson Nephew. And so it do. 'I've been a cellarman my life through, with my mind fully given to the business. What's the consequence? I'm as muddled a man as lives—you won't find a muddler man than me—nor yet you won't find my equal in molloncolly. Sing of Filling the bumper fair, Every drop you sprinkle, O'er the brow of care, Smooths away a wrinkle? Yes. P'raps so. But try filling yourself through the pores, underground, when you don't want to it!"

"I am sorry to hear this, Joey. I had even thought that you might join a singing-class in the house."

"Me, sir? No, no, Young Master Wilding, you won't catch Joey Ladle muddling the Armony. A pecking-machine, sir, is all that I am capable of proving myself, out of my cellars; but that you're welcome to, if you think it's worth your while to keep such a thing on your premises."

"I do, Joey."

"Say no more, sir. The Business's word is my law. And you're a going to take Young Master George Vendale partner into the old Business?"

"I am, Joey."

"More changes, you see! But don't change the name of the Firm again. Don't do it, Young Master Wilding. It was bad luck enough to make it Yourself and Co. Better by far have left it Pebbleson Nephew that good luck always stuck to. You should never change luck when it's good, sir."

"At all events, I have no intention of changing the name of the House again, Joey."

"Glad to hear it, and wish you good day, Young Master Wilding. But you had better by half," muttered Joey Ladle, inaudibly, as he closed the door and shook his head, "have let the name alone from the first. You had better by half have followed the luck instead of crossing it."

ENTER THE HOUSEKEEPER.

The wine-merchant sat in his dining-room next morning, to receive the personal applicants for the vacant post in his establishment. It was an old-fashioned wainscoted room; the panels ornamented with festoons of flowers carved in wood; with an oaken floor, a well-worn Turkey carpet, and dark mahogany furniture, all of which had seen service and polish under Pebbleson Nephew. The great sideboard had assisted at many business-dinners given by Pebbleson Nephew to their connexion, on the

principle of throwing sprats overboard to catch whales; and Pebbleson Nephew's comprehensive three-sided plate-warmer, made to fit the whole front of the large fireplace, kept watch beneath it over a sarcophagus-shaped cellaret that had in its time held many a dozen of Pebbleson Nephew's wine. But the little rubicund old bachelor with a pigtail, whose portrait was over the sideboard (and who could easily be identified as decidedly Pebbleson and decidedly not Nephew), had retired into another sarcophagus, and the plate-warmer had grown as cold as he. So, the golden and black griffins that supported the candelabra, with black balls in their mouths at the end of gilded chains, looked as if in their old age they had lost all heart for playing at ball, and were dolefully exhibiting their chains in the Missionary line of inquiry, whether they had not earned emancipation by this time, and were not griffins and brothers?

Such a Columbus of a morning was the summer morning, that it discovered Cripple Corner. The light and warmth pierced in at the open windows, and irradiated the picture of a lady hanging over the chimney-piece, the only other decoration of the walls.

"My mother at five-and-twenty," said Mr. Wilding to himself, as his eyes enthusiastically followed the light to the portrait's face, "I hang up here, in order that visitors may admire my mother in the bloom of her youth and beauty. My mother at fifty I hang in the seclusion of my own chamber, as a remembrance sacred to me. Oh! It's you, Jarvis!"

These latter words he addressed to a clerk who had tapped at the door, and now looked in.

"Yes, sir. I merely wished to mention that it's gone ten, sir, and that there are several females in the Counting-House."

"Dear me!" said the wine-merchant, deepening in the pink of his complexion and whitening in the white, "are there several? So many as several? I had better begin before there are more. I'll see them one by one, Jarvis, in the order of their arrival."

Hastily entrenching himself in his easy-chair at the table behind a great inkstand, having first placed a chair on the other side of the table opposite his own seat, Mr. Wilding entered on his task with considerable trepidation.

He ran the gauntlet that must be run on any such occasion. There were the usual species of profoundly unsympathetic women, and the usual species of much too sympathetic women. There were buccaneering widows who came to seize him, and who griped umbrellas under their arms, as if each umbrella were he, and each griper had got him. There were towering maiden ladies who had seen better days, and who came armed with clerical testimonials to their theology, as if he were Saint Peter with his keys. There were gentle maiden ladies who came to marry him. There were professional housekeepers, like non-commissioned officers, who put him through his domestic exercise, instead of submitting themselves to catechism. There were languid invalids to whom salary was

not so much an object as the comforts of a private hospital. There were sensitive creatures who burst into tears on being addressed, and had to be restored with glasses of cold water. There were some respondents who came two together, a highly promising one and a wholly unpromising one: of whom the promising one answered all questions charmingly, until it would at last appear that she was not a candidate at all, but only the friend of the unpromising one, who had glowered in absolute silence and apparent injury.

At last, when the good wine-merchant's simple heart was failing him, there entered an applicant quite different from all the rest. A woman, perhaps fifty, but looking younger, with a face remarkable for placid cheerfulness, and a manner no less remarkable for its quiet expression of equability of temper. Nothing in her dress could have been changed to her advantage. Nothing in the noiseless self-possession of her manner could have been changed to her advantage. Nothing could have been in better unison with both, than her voice when she answered the question: "What name shall I have the pleasure of noting down?" with the words, "My name is Sarah Goldstraw. Mrs. Goldstraw. My husband has been dead many years, and we had no family."

Half a dozen questions had scarcely extracted as much to the purpose from any one else. The voice dwelt so agreeably on Mr. Wilding's ear as he made his note, that he was rather long about it. When he looked up again, Mrs. Goldstraw's glance had naturally gone round the room, and now returned to him from the chimney-piece. Its expression was one of frank readiness to be questioned, and to answer straight.

"You will excuse my asking you a few questions?" said the modest wine-merchant.

"Oh, surely, sir. Or I should have no business here."

"Have you filled the station of housekeeper before?"

"Only once, I have lived with the same widow lady for twelve years. Ever since I lost my husband. She was an invalid, and is lately dead: which is the occasion of my now wearing black."

"I do not doubt that she has left you the best credentials?" said Mr. Wilding.

"I hope I may say, the very best. I thought it would save trouble, sir, if I wrote down the name and address of her representatives, and brought it with me." Laying a card on the table.

"You singularly remind me, Mrs. Goldstraw," said Wilding, taking the card beside him, "of a manner and tone of voice that I was once acquainted with. Not of an individual—I feel sure of that, though I cannot recal what it is I have in my mind—but of a general bearing. I ought to add, it was a kind and pleasant one."

She smiled, as she rejoined: "At least, I am very glad of that, sir."

"Yes," said the wine-merchant, thoughtfully

repeating his last phrase, with a momentary glance at his future housekeeper, "it was a kind and pleasant one. But that is the most I can make of it. Memory is sometimes like a half-forgotten dream. I don't know how it may appear to you, Mrs. Goldstraw, but so it appears to me."

Probably it appeared to Mrs. Goldstraw in a similar light, for she quietly assented to the proposition. Mr. Wilding then offered to put himself at once in communication with the gentlemen named upon the card: a firm of proctors in Doctors' Commons. To this, Mrs. Goldstraw thankfully assented. Doctors' Commons not being far off, Mr. Wilding suggested the feasibility of Mrs. Goldstraw's looking in again, say in three hours' time. Mrs. Goldstraw readily undertook to do so. In fine, the result of Mr. Wilding's inquiries being eminently satisfactory, Mrs. Goldstraw was that afternoon engaged (on her own perfectly fair terms) to come to-morrow and set up her rest as housekeeper in Cripple Corner.

THE HOUSEKEEPER SPEAKS.

On the next day Mrs. Goldstraw arrived, to enter on her domestic duties.

Having settled herself in her own room, without troubling the servants, and without wasting time, the new housekeeper announced herself as waiting to be favoured with any instructions which her master might wish to give her. The wine-merchant received Mrs. Goldstraw in the dining-room, in which he had seen her on the previous day; and, the usual preliminary civilities having passed on either side, the two sat down to take counsel together on the affairs of the house.

"About the meals, sir?" said Mrs. Goldstraw. "Have I a large, or a small, number to provide for?"

"If I can carry out a certain old-fashioned plan of mine," replied Mr. Wilding, "you will have a large number to provide for. I am a lonely single man, Mrs. Goldstraw; and I hope to live with all the persons in my employment as if they were members of my family. Until that time comes, you will only have me, and the new partner whom I expect immediately, to provide for. What my partner's habits may be, I cannot yet say. But I may describe myself as a man of regular hours, with an invariable appetite that you may depend upon to an ounce."

"About breakfast, sir?" asked Mrs. Goldstraw. "Is there anything particular—?"

She hesitated, and left the sentence unfinished. Her eyes turned slowly away from her master, and looked towards the chimney-piece. If she had been a less excellent and experienced housekeeper, Mr. Wilding might have fancied that her attention was beginning to wander at the very outset of the interview.

"Eight o'clock is my breakfast-hour," he resumed. "It is one of my virtues to be never tired of broiled bacon, and it is one of my vices to be habitually suspicious of the freshness of eggs." Mrs. Goldstraw looked back at him,

still a little divided between her master's chimney-piece and her master. "I take tea," Mr. Wilding went on; "and I am perhaps rather nervous and fidgety about drinking it, within a certain time after it is made. If my tea stands too long——"

He hesitated, on his side, and left the sentence unfinished. If he had not been engaged in discussing a subject of such paramount interest to himself as his breakfast, Mrs. Goldstraw might have fancied that *his* attention was beginning to wander at the very outset of the interview.

"If your tea stands too long, sir——?" said the housekeeper, politely taking up her master's lost thread.

"If my tea stands too long," repeated the wine-merchant, mechanically, his mind getting further and further away from his breakfast, and his eyes fixing themselves more and more inquiringly on his housekeeper's face. "If my tea—— Dear, dear me, Mrs. Goldstraw! what is the manner and tone of voice that you remind me of? It strikes me even more strongly to-day, than it did when I saw you yesterday. What can it be?"

"What can it be?" repeated Mrs. Goldstraw.

She said the words, evidently thinking while she spoke them of something else. The wine-merchant, still looking at her inquiringly, observed that her eyes wandered towards the chimney-piece once more. They fixed on the portrait of his mother, which hung there, and looked at it with that slight contraction of the brow which accompanies a scarcely conscious effort of memory. Mr. Wilding remarked:

"My late dear mother, when she was five-and-twenty."

Mrs. Goldstraw thanked him with a movement of the head for being at the pains to explain the picture, and said, with a cleared brow, that it was the portrait of a very beautiful lady.

Mr. Wilding, falling back into his former perplexity, tried once more to recover that lost recollection, associated so closely, and yet so undiscoverably, with his new housekeeper's voice and manner.

"Excuse my asking you a question which has nothing to do with me or my breakfast," he said. "May I inquire if you have ever occupied another situation than the situation of housekeeper?"

"Oh yes, sir. I began life as one of the nurses at the Foundling."

"Why, that's it!" cried the wine-merchant, pushing back his chair. "By Heaven! Their manner is the manner you remind me of!"

In an astonished look at him, Mrs. Goldstraw changed colour, checked herself, turned her eyes upon the ground, and sat still and silent.

"What is the matter?" asked Mr. Wilding.

"Do I understand that you were in the Foundling, sir?"

"Certainly. I am not ashamed to own it."

"Under the name you now bear?"

"Under the name of Walter Wilding."

"And the lady——?" Mrs. Goldstraw

stopped short, with a look at the portrait which was now unmistakably a look of alarm.

"You mean my mother," interrupted Mr. Wilding.

"Your——mother," repeated the housekeeper, a little constrainedly, "removed you from the Foundling? At what age, sir?"

"At between eleven and twelve years old. It's quite a romantic adventure, Mrs. Goldstraw."

He told the story of the lady having spoken to him, while he sat at dinner with the other boys in the Foundling, and of all that had followed, in his innocently communicative way. "My poor mother could never have discovered me," he added, "if she had not met with one of the matrons who pitied her. The matron consented to touch the boy whose name was 'Walter Wilding' as she went round the dinner-tables—and so my mother discovered me again, after having parted from me as an infant at the Foundling doors."

At those words Mrs. Goldstraw's hand, resting on the table, dropped helplessly into her lap. She sat, looking at her new master, with a face that had turned deadly pale, and with eyes that expressed an unutterable dismay.

"What does this mean?" asked the wine-merchant. "Stop!" he cried. "Is there something else in the past time which I ought to associate with you? I remember my mother telling me of another person at the Foundling, to whose kindness she owed a debt of gratitude. When she first parted with me, as an infant, one of the nurses informed her of the name that had been given to me in the institution. You were that nurse?"

"God forgive me, sir—I was that nurse!"

"God forgive you!"

"We had better get back, sir (if I may make so bold as to say so), to my duties in the house," said Mrs. Goldstraw. "Your breakfast-hour is eight. Do you lunch, or dine, in the middle of the day?"

The excessive pinkness which Mr. Bintrey had noticed in his client's face began to appear there once more. Mr. Wilding put his hand to his head, and mastered some momentary confusion in that quarter, before he spoke again.

"Mrs. Goldstraw," he said, "you are concealing something from me!"

The housekeeper obstinately repeated, "Please to favour me, sir, by saying whether you lunch, or dine, in the middle of the day?"

"I don't know what I do in the middle of the day. I can't enter into my household affairs, Mrs. Goldstraw, till I know why you regret an act of kindness to my mother, which she always spoke of gratefully to the end of her life. You are not doing me a service by your silence. You are agitating me, you are alarming me, you are bringing on the singing in my head."

His hand went up to his head again, and the pink in his face deepened by a shade or two.

"It's hard, sir, on just entering your service," said the housekeeper, "to say what may cost me the loss of your good will. Please to remember, end how it may, that I only speak

because you have insisted on my speaking, and because I see that I am alarming you by my silence. When I told the poor lady, whose portrait you have got there, the name by which her infant was christened in the Foundling, I allowed myself to forget my duty, and dreadful consequences, I am afraid, have followed from it. I'll tell you the truth, as plainly as I can. A few months from the time when I had informed the lady of her baby's name, there came to our institution in the country another lady (a stranger), whose object was to adopt one of our children. She brought the needful permission with her, and after looking at a great many of the children, without being able to make up her mind, she took a sudden fancy to one of the babies—a boy—under my care. Try, pray try, to compose yourself, sir! It's no use disguising it any longer. The child the stranger took away was the child of that lady whose portrait hangs there!"

Mr. Wilding started to his feet. "Impossible!" he cried out, vehemently. "What are you talking about? What absurd story are you telling me now? There's her portrait! Haven't I told you so already? The portrait of my mother!"

"When that unhappy lady removed you from the Foundling, in after years," said Mrs. Goldstraw, gently, "she was the victim, and you were the victim, sir, of a dreadful mistake."

He dropped back into his chair. "The room goes round with me," he said. "My head! my head!" The housekeeper rose in alarm, and opened the windows. Before she could get to the door to call for help, a sudden burst of tears relieved the oppression which had at first almost appeared to threaten his life. He signed entreatingly to Mrs. Goldstraw not to leave him. She waited until the paroxysm of weeping had worn itself out. He raised his head as he recovered himself, and looked at her with the angry unreasoning suspicion of a weak man.

"Mistake?" he said, wildly repeating her last word. "How do I know you are not mistaken yourself?"

"There is no hope that I am mistaken, sir. I will tell you why, when you are better fit to hear it."

"Now! now!"

The tone in which he spoke warned Mrs. Goldstraw that it would be cruel kindness to let him comfort himself a moment longer with the vain hope that she might be wrong. A few words more would end it—and those few words she determined to speak.

"I have told you," she said, "that the child of the lady whose portrait hangs there, was adopted in its infancy, and taken away by a stranger. I am as certain of what I say as that I am now sitting here, obliged to distress you, sir, sorely against my will. Please to carry your mind on, now, to about three months after that time. I was then at the Foundling, in London, waiting to take some children to our institution in the country. There was a question that day about naming an infant—a boy—who had just been received. We generally named them out of the

Directory. On this occasion, one of the gentlemen who managed the Hospital happened to be looking over the Register. He noticed that the name of the baby who had been adopted ('Walter Wilding') was scratched out—for the reason, of course, that the child had been removed for good from our care. 'Here's a name to let,' he said. 'Give it to the new foundling who has been received to-day.' The name was given, and the child was christened. You, sir, were that child."

The wine-merchant's head dropped on his breast. "I was that child!" he said to himself, trying helplessly to fix the idea in his mind. "I was that child!"

"Not very long after you had been received into the Institution, sir," pursued Mrs. Goldstraw, "I left my situation there, to be married. If you will remember that, and if you can give your mind to it, you will see for yourself how the mistake happened. Between eleven and twelve years passed before the lady, whom you have believed to be your mother, returned to the Foundling, to find her son, and to remove him to her own home. The lady only knew that her infant had been called 'Walter Wilding.' The matron who took pity on her, could but point out the only 'Walter Wilding' known in the Institution. I, who might have set the matter right, was far away from the Foundling and all that belonged to it. There was nothing—there was really nothing that could prevent this terrible mistake from taking place. I feel for you—I do indeed, sir! You must think—and with reason—that it was in an evil hour that I came here (innocently enough, I'm sure), to apply for your housekeeper's place. I feel as if I was to blame—I feel as if I ought to have had more self-command. If I had only been able to keep my face from showing you, what that portrait and what your own words put into my mind—you need never, to your dying day, have known what you know now."

Mr. Wilding looked up suddenly. The inbred honesty of the man rose in protest against the housekeeper's last words. His mind seemed to steady itself, for the moment, under the shock that had fallen on it.

"Do you mean to say that you would have concealed this from me if you could?" he exclaimed.

"I hope I should always tell the truth, sir, if I was asked," said Mrs. Goldstraw. "And I know it is better for *me* that I should not have a secret of this sort weighing on my mind. But is it better for *you*? What use can it serve now—?"

"What use? Why, good Lord! if your story is true—"

"Should I have told it, sir, as I am now situated, if it had not been true?"

"I beg your pardon," said the wine-merchant. "You must make allowance for me. This dreadful discovery is something I can't realise even yet. We loved each other so dearly—I felt so fondly that I was her son. She died, Mrs. Goldstraw, in my arms—she died blessing me as only a mother *could* have

blessed me. And now, after all these years, to be told she was *not* my mother! O me, O me! I don't know what I am saying!" he cried, as the impulse of self-control under which he had spoken a moment since, flickered, and died out. "It was not this dreadful grief—it was something else that I had in my mind to speak of. Yes, yes. You surprised me—you wounded me just now. You talked as if you would have hidden this from me, if you could. Don't talk in that way again. It would have been a crime to have hidden it. You mean well, I know. I don't want to distress you—you are a kind-hearted woman. But you don't remember what my position is. She left me all that I possess, in the firm persuasion that I was her son. I am not her son. I have taken the place, I have innocently got the inheritance of another man. He must be found! How do I know he is not at this moment in misery, without bread to eat? He must be found! My only hope of bearing up against the shock that has fallen on me, is the hope of doing something which *she* would have approved. You must know more, Mrs. Goldstraw, than you have told me yet. Who was the stranger who adopted the child? You must have heard the lady's name?"

"I never heard it, sir. I have never seen her, or heard of her, since."

"Did she say nothing when she took the child away? Search your memory. She must have said something."

"Only one thing, sir, that I can remember. It was a miserably bad season, that year; and many of the children were suffering from it. When she took the baby away, the lady said to me, laughing, 'Don't be alarmed about his health. He will be brought up in a better climate than this—I am going to take him to Switzerland.'"

"To Switzerland? What part of Switzerland?"

"She didn't say, sir."

"Only that faint clue!" said Mr. Wilding. "And a quarter of a century has passed since the child was taken away! What am I to do?"

"I hope you won't take offence at my freedom, sir," said Mrs. Goldstraw; "but why should you distress yourself about what is to be done? He may not be alive now, for anything you know. And, if he is alive, it's not likely he can be in any distress. The lady who adopted him was a bred and born lady—it was easy to see that. And she must have satisfied them at the Foundling that she could provide for the child, or they would never have let her take him away. If I was in your place, sir—please to excuse my saying so—I should comfort myself with remembering that I had loved that poor lady whose portrait you have got there—truly loved her as my mother, and that she had truly loved me as her son. All she gave to you, she gave for the sake of that love. It never altered while she lived; and it won't alter, I'm sure, as long as *you* live. How can you have a better right, sir, to keep what you have got than that?"

Mr. Wilding's immovable honesty saw the

fallacy in his housekeeper's point of view at a glance.

"You don't understand me," he said. "It's *because* I loved her that I feel it a duty—a sacred duty—to do justice to her son. If he is a living man, I must find him: for my own sake, as well as for his. I shall break down under this dreadful trial, unless I employ myself—actively, instantly employ myself—in doing what my conscience tells me ought to be done. I must speak to my lawyer; I must set my lawyer at work before I sleep to-night." He approached a tube in the wall of the room, and called down through it to the office below. "Leave me for a little, Mrs. Goldstraw," he resumed; "I shall be more composed, I shall be better able to speak to you later in the day. We shall get on well—I hope we shall get on well together—in spite of what has happened. It isn't your fault; I know it isn't your fault. There! there! shake hands; and—and do the best you can in the house—I can't talk about it now."

The door opened as Mrs. Goldstraw advanced towards it; and Mr. Jarvis appeared.

"Send for Mr. Bintrey," said the wine-merchant. "Say I want to see him directly."

The clerk unconsciously suspended the execution of the order, by announcing "Mr. Vendale," and showing in the new partner in the firm of Wilding and Co.

"Pray excuse me for one moment, George Vendale," said Wilding. "I have a word to say to Jarvis. Send for Mr. Bintrey," he repeated—"send at once."

Mr. Jarvis laid a letter on the table before he left the room.

"From our correspondents at Neuchâtel, I think, sir. The letter has got the Swiss postmark."

NEW CHARACTERS ON THE SCENE.

The words, "The Swiss Postmark," following so soon upon the housekeeper's reference to Switzerland, wrought Mr. Wilding's agitation to such a remarkable height, that his new partner could not decently make a pretence of letting it pass unnoticed.

"Wilding," he asked hurriedly, and yet stopping short and glancing around as if for some visible cause of his state of mind: "what is the matter?"

"My good George Vendale," returned the wine-merchant, giving his hand with an appealing look, rather as if he wanted help to get over some obstacle, than as if he gave it in welcome or salutation: "my good George Vendale, so much is the matter, that I shall never be myself again. It is impossible that I can ever be myself again. For, in fact, I am not myself."

The new partner, a brown-cheeked handsome fellow, of about his own age, with a quick determined eye and an impulsive manner, retorted with natural astonishment: "Not yourself?"

"Not what I supposed myself to be," said Wilding.

"What, in the name of wonder, *did* you suppose yourself to be that you are not?" was the rejoinder, delivered with a cheerful frankness, inviting confidence from a more reticent man. "I may ask without impertinence, now that we are partners."

"There again!" cried Wilding, leaning back in his chair, with a lost look at the other. "Partners! I had no right to come into this business. It was never meant for me. My mother never meant it should be mine. I mean, his mother meant it should be his—if I mean anything—or if I am anybody."

"Come, come," urged his partner, after a moment's pause, and taking possession of him with that calm confidence which inspires a strong nature when it honestly desires to aid a weak one. "Whatever has gone wrong, has gone wrong through no fault of yours, I am very sure. I was not in this counting-house with you under the old *régime*, for three years, to doubt you, Wilding. We were not younger men than we are, together, for that. Let me begin our partnership by being a serviceable partner, and setting right whatever is wrong. Has that letter anything to do with it?"

"Hah!" said Wilding, with his hand to his temple. "There again! My head! I was forgetting the coincidence. The Swiss postmark."

"At a second glance I see that the letter is unopened, so it is not very likely to have much to do with the matter," said Vendale, with comforting composure. "Is it for you, or for us?"

"For us," said Wilding.

"Suppose I open it and read it aloud, to get it out of our way?"

"Thank you, thank you."

"The letter is only from our champagne-making friends, the House at Neuchâtel. 'Dear Sir. We are in receipt of yours of the 28th ult., informing us that you have taken your Mr. Vendale into partnership, whereon we beg you to receive the assurance of our felicitations. Permit us to embrace the occasion of specially commending to you, M. Jules Obenreizer.' Impossible!"

Wilding looked up in quick apprehension, and cried, "Eh?"

"Impossible sort of name," returned his partner, slightly—"Obenreizer. —Of specially commending to you M. Jules Obenreizer, of Soho-square, London (north side), henceforth fully accredited as our agent, and who has already had the honour of making the acquaintance of your Mr. Vendale, in his (said M. Obenreizer's) native country, Switzerland.' To be sure: pooh pooh, what have I been thinking of! I remember now; 'when travelling with his niece.'"

"With his —?" Vendale had so slurred the last word, that Wilding had not heard it.

"When travelling with his Niece. Obenreizer's Niece," said Vendale, in a somewhat superfluously lucid manner. "Niece of Obenreizer. (I met them in my first Swiss tour, travelled a little with them, and lost them for two years; met them again, my Swiss tour before last, and

have lost them ever since.) Obenreizer. Niece of Obenreizer. To be sure! Possible sort of name, after all! 'M. Obenreizer is in possession of our absolute confidence, and we do not doubt you will esteem his merits.' Duly signed by the House, 'Defresnier et C^{ie}.' Very well. I undertake to see M. Obenreizer presently, and clear him out of the way. That clears the Swiss postmark out of the way. So now, my dear Wilding, tell me what I can clear out of *your* way, and I'll find a way to clear it."

More than ready and grateful to be thus taken charge of, the honest wine-merchant wrung his partner's hand, and, beginning his tale by pathetically declaring himself an Impostor, told it.

"It was on this matter, no doubt, that you were sending for Bintrey when I came in?" said his partner, after reflecting.

"It was."

"He has experience and a shrewd head; I shall be anxious to know his opinion. It is bold and hazardous in me to give you mine before I know his, but I am not good at holding back. Plainly, then, I do not see these circumstances as you see them. I do not see your position as you see it. As to your being an Impostor, my dear Wilding, that is simply absurd, because no man can be that without being a consenting party to an imposition. Clearly you never were so. As to your enrichment by the lady who believed you to be her son, and whom you were forced to believe, on her own showing, to be your mother, consider whether that did not arise out of the personal relations between you. You gradually became much attached to her; she gradually became much attached to you. It was on you, personally you, as I see the case, that she conferred these worldly advantages; it was from her, personally her, that you took them."

"She supposed me," objected Wilding, shaking his head, "to have a natural claim upon her, which I had not."

"I must admit that," replied his partner, "to be true. But if she had made the discovery that you have made, six months before she died, do you think it would have cancelled the years you were together, and the tenderness that each of you had conceived for the other, each on increasing knowledge of the other?"

"What I think," said Wilding, simply but stoutly holding to the bare fact, "can no more change the truth than it can bring down the sky. The truth is that I stand possessed of what was meant for another man."

"He may be dead," said Vendale.

"He may be alive," said Wilding. "And if he is alive, have I not—innocently, I grant you innocently—robbed him of enough? Have I not robbed him of all the happy time that I enjoyed in his stead? Have I not robbed him of the exquisite delight that filled my soul when that dear lady," stretching his hand towards the picture; "told me she was my mother? Have I not robbed him of all the care she lavished on me? Have I not even robbed him of all the devotion and duty that I so proudly gave to

her? Therefore it is that I ask myself, George Vendale, and I ask you, where is he? What has become of him?"

"Who can tell?"

"I must try to find out who can tell. I must institute inquiries. I must never desist from prosecuting inquiries. I will live upon the interest of my share—I ought to say his share—in this business, and will lay up the rest for him. When I find him, I may perhaps throw myself upon his generosity; but I will yield up all to him. I will, I swear. As I loved and honoured her," said Wilding, reverently kissing his hand towards the picture, and then covering his eyes with it. "As I loved and honoured her, and have a world of reasons to be grateful to her!" And so broke down again.

His partner rose from the chair he had occupied, and stood beside him with a hand softly laid upon his shoulder. "Walter, I knew you before to-day to be an upright man, with a pure conscience and a fine heart. It is very fortunate for me that I have the privilege to travel on in life so near to so trustworthy a man. I am thankful for it. Use me as your right hand, and rely upon me to the death. Don't think the worse of me if I protest to you that my uppermost feeling at present is a confused, you may call it an unreasonable, one. I feel far more pity for the lady and for you, because you did not stand in your supposed relations, than I can feel for the unknown man (if he ever became a man), because he was unconsciously displaced. You have done well in sending for Mr. Bintrey. What I think will be a part of his advice, I know is the whole of mine. Do not move a step in this serious matter precipitately. The secret must be kept among us with great strictness, for to part with it lightly would be to invite fraudulent claims, to encourage a host of knaves, to let loose a flood of perjury and plotting. I have no more to say now, Walter, than to remind you that you sold me a share in your business, expressly to save yourself from more work than your present health is fit for, and that I bought it expressly to do work, and mean to do it."

With these words, and a parting grip of his partner's shoulder that gave them the best emphasis they could have had, George Vendale betook himself presently to the counting-house, and presently afterwards to the address of M. Jules Obenreizer.

As he turned into Soho-square, and directed his steps towards its north side, a deepened colour shot across his sun-browned face, which Wilding, if he had been a better observer, or had been less occupied with his own trouble, might have noticed when his partner read aloud a certain passage in their Swiss correspondent's letter, which he had not read so distinctly as the rest.

A curious colony of mountaineers has long been enclosed within that small flat London district of Soho. Swiss watchmakers, Swiss silver-chasers, Swiss jewellers, Swiss importers of Swiss musical boxes and Swiss toys of various kinds, draw close together there. Swiss profes-

sors of music, painting, and languages; Swiss artificers in steady work; Swiss couriers, and other Swiss servants chronically out of place; industrious Swiss laundresses and clear-starchers; mysteriously existing Swiss of both sexes; Swiss, creditable and Swiss discreditable; Swiss to be trusted by all means, and Swiss to be trusted by no means; these diverse Swiss particles are attracted to a centre in the district of Soho. Shabby Swiss eating-houses, coffee-houses, and lodging-houses, Swiss drinks and dishes, Swiss service for Sundays, and Swiss schools for week-days, are all to be found there. Even the native-born English taverns drive a sort of broken-English trade; announcing in their windows Swiss whets and drams, and sheltering in their bars Swiss skirmishes of love and animosity on most nights in the year.

When the new partner in Wilding and Co. rang the bell of a door bearing the blunt inscription OBERREIZER on a brass plate—the inner door of a substantial house, whose ground story was devoted to the sale of Swiss clocks—he passed at once into domestic Switzerland. A white-tiled stove for winter-time filled the fireplace of the room into which he was shown, the room's bare floor was laid together in a neat pattern of several ordinary woods, the room had a prevalent air of surface bareness and much scrubbing; and the little square of flowery carpet by the sofa, and the velvet chimney-board with its capacious clock and vases of artificial flowers, contended with that tone, as if, in bringing out the whole effect, a Parisian had adapted a dairy to domestic purposes.

Mimic water was dropping off a mill-wheel under the clock. The visitor had not stood before it, following it with his eyes, a minute, when M. Obenreizer, at his elbow, startled him by saying, in very good English, very slightly clipped: "How do you do? So glad!"

"I beg your pardon. I didn't hear you come in."

"Not at all! Sit, please."

Releasing his visitor's two arms, which he had lightly pinioned at the elbows by way of embrace, M. Obenreizer also sat, remarking, with a smile: "You are well? So glad!" and touching his elbows again.

"I don't know," said Vendale, after exchange of salutations, "whether you may yet have heard of me from your House at Neuchâtel?"

"Ah, yes!"

"In connexion with Wilding and Co.?"

"Ah, surely!"

"Is it not odd that I should come to you, in London here, as one of the Firm of Wilding and Co., to pay the Firm's respects?"

"Not at all! What did I always observe when we were on the mountains? We call them vast; but the world is so little. So little is the world, that one cannot keep away from persons. There are so few persons in the world, that they continually cross and re-cross. So very little is the world, that one cannot get rid of a person. 'Not,' touching his elbows again, with an ingratiatory smile, "that one would desire to get rid of you."

"I hope not, M. Obenreizer."

"Please call me, in your country, Mr. I call myself so, for I love your country. If I *could* be English! But I am born. And you? Though descended from so fine a family, you have had the condescension to come into trade? Stop though. Wines? Is it trade in England or profession? Not fine art?"

"Mr. Obenreizer," returned Vendale, somewhat out of countenance, "I was but a silly young fellow, just of age, when I first had the pleasure of travelling with you, and when you and I and Mademoiselle your niece—who is well?"

"Thank you. Who is well."

"—Shared some slight glacier dangers together. If, with a boy's vanity, I rather vaunted my family, I hope I did so as a kind of introduction of myself. It was very weak, and in very bad taste; but perhaps you know our English proverb, 'Live and learn.'"

"You make too much of it," returned the Swiss. "And what the devil! After all, yours *was* a fine family."

George Vendale's laugh betrayed a little vexation as he rejoined: "Well! I was strongly attached to my parents, and when we first travelled together, Mr. Obenreizer, I was in the first flush of coming into what my father and mother left me. So I hope it may have been, after all, more youthful openness of speech and heart than boastfulness."

"All openness of speech and heart! No boastfulness!" cried Obenreizer. "You tax yourself too heavily. You tax yourself, my faith! as if you was your Government taxing you! Besides, it commenced with me. I remember, that evening in the boat upon the lake, floating among the reflections of the mountains and valleys, the crags and pine woods, which were my earliest remembrance, I drew a word-picture of my sordid childhood. Of our poor hut, by the waterfall which my mother showed to travellers; of the cow-shed where I slept with the cow; of my idiot half-brother always sitting at the door, or limping down the Pass to beg; of my half-sister always spinning, and resting her enormous goitre on a great stone; of my being a famished naked little wretch of two or three years, when they were men and women with hard hands to beat me, I, the only child of my father's second marriage—if it even was a marriage. What more natural than for you to compare notes with me, and say, 'We are as, one by age; at that same time I sat upon my mother's lap in my father's carriage, rolling through the rich English streets, all luxury surrounding me, all squalid poverty kept far from me. Such is *my* earliest remembrance as opposed to yours!'"

Mr. Obenreizer was a black-haired young man of a dark complexion, through whose swarthy skin no red glow ever shone. When colour would have come into another cheek, a hardly discernible beat would come into his, as if the machinery for bringing up the ardent blood were there, but the machinery were dry. He was robustly made, well proportioned, and had

handsome features. Many would have perceived that some surface change in him would have set them more at their ease with him, without being able to define what change. If his lips could have been made much thicker, and his neck much thinner, they would have found their want supplied.

But the great Obenreizer peculiarity was, that a certain nameless film would come over his eyes—apparently by the action of his own will—which would impenetrably veil, not only from those tellers of tales, but from his face at large, every expression save one of attention. It by no means followed that his attention should be wholly given to the person with whom he spoke, or even wholly bestowed on present sounds and objects. Rather, it was a comprehensive watchfulness of everything he had in his own mind, and everything that he knew to be, or suspected to be, in the minds of other men.

At this stage of the conversation, Mr. Obenreizer's film came over him.

"The object of my present visit," said Vendale, "is, I need hardly say, to assure you of the friendliness of Wilding and Co., and of the goodness of your credit with us, and of our desire to be of service to you. We hope shortly to offer you our hospitality. Things are not quite in train with us yet, for my partner, Mr. Wilding, is reorganising the domestic part of our establishment, and is interrupted by some private affairs. You don't know Mr. Wilding, I believe?"

Mr. Obenreizer did not.

"You must come together soon. He will be glad to have made your acquaintance, and I think I may predict that you will be glad to have made his. You have not been long established in London, I suppose, Mr. Obenreizer?"

"It is only now that I have undertaken this agency."

"Mademoiselle your niece—is—not married?"

"Not married."

George Vendale glanced about him, as if for any tokens of her.

"She has been in London?"

"She *is* in London."

"When, and where, might I have the honour of recalling myself to her remembrance?"

Mr. Obenreizer, discarding his film and touching his visitor's elbows as before, said lightly: "Come up-stairs."

Fluttered enough by the suddenness with which the interview he had sought was coming upon him after all, George Vendale followed up-stairs. In a room over the chamber he had just quitted—a room also Swiss-appointed—a young lady sat near one of three windows, working at an embroidery-frame; and an older lady sat with her face turned close to another white-tiled stove (though it was summer, and the stove was not lighted), cleaning gloves. The young lady wore an unusual quantity of fair bright hair, very prettily braided about a rather rounder white forehead than the average English type, and so her face might have been

a shade—or say a light—rounder than the average English face, and her figure slightly rounder than the figure of the average English girl at nineteen. A remarkable indication of freedom and grace of limb, in her quiet attitude, and a wonderful purity and freshness of colour in her dimpled face and bright grey eyes, seemed fraught with mountain air. Switzerland too, though the general fashion of her dress was English, peeped out of the fanciful bodice she wore, and lurked in the curious clocked red stocking, and in its little silver-buckled shoe. As to the elder lady, sitting with her feet apart upon the lower brass ledge of the stove, supporting a lap-full of gloves while she cleaned one stretched on her left hand, she was a true Swiss impersonation of another kind; from the breadth of her cushion-like back, and the ponderosity of her respectable legs (if the word be admissible), to the black velvet band tied tightly round her throat for the repression of a rising tendency to *goitre*; or, higher still, to her great copper-coloured gold ear-rings; or, higher still, to her head-dress of black gauze stretched on wire.

"Miss Marguerite," said Obenreizer to the young lady, "do you recollect this gentleman?"

"I think," she answered, rising from her seat, surprised and a little confused: "it is Mr. Vendale?"

"I think it is," said Obenreizer, dryly. "Permit me, Mr. Vendale. Madame Dor."

The elder lady by the stove, with the glove stretched on her left hand, like a Glover's sign, half got up, half looked over her broad shoulder, and wholly plumped down again and rubbed away.

"Madame Dor," said Obenreizer, smiling, "is so kind as to keep me free from stain or tear. Madame Dor humours my weakness for being always neat, and devotes her time to removing every one of my specks and spots."

Madame Dor, with the stretched glove in the air, and her eyes closely scrutinising its palm, discovered a tough spot in Mr. Obenreizer at that instant, and rubbed hard at him. George Vendale took his seat by the embroidery-frame (having first taken the fair right hand that his entrance had checked), and glanced at the gold cross that dipped into the bodice, with something of the devotion of a pilgrim who had reached his shrine at last. Obenreizer stood in the middle of the room with his thumbs in his waistcoat-pockets, and became filmy.

"He was saying down-stairs, Miss Obenreizer," observed Vendale, "that the world is so small a place, that people cannot escape one another. I have found it much too large for me since I saw you last."

"Have you travelled so far, then?" she inquired.

"Not so far, for I have only gone back to Switzerland each year; but I could have wished—and indeed I have wished very often—that the little world did not afford such opportunities for long escapes as it does. If it had been less, I might have found my fellow-travellers sooner, you know."

The pretty Marguerite coloured, and very slightly glanced in the direction of Madame Dor.

"You find us at length, Mr. Vendale. Perhaps you may lose us again."

"I trust not. The curious coincidence that has enabled me to find you, encourages me to hope not."

"What is that coincidence, sir, if you please?"

A dainty little native touch in this turn of speech, and in its tone, made it perfectly captivating, thought George Vendale, when again he noticed an instantaneous glance towards Madame Dor. A caution seemed to be conveyed in it, rapid flash though it was; so he quietly took heed of Madame Dor from that time forth.

"It is that I happen to have become a partner in a House of business in London, to which Mr. Obenreizer happens this very day to be expressly recommended: and that, too, by another house of business in Switzerland, in which (as it turns out) we both have a commercial interest. He has not told you?"

"Ah!" cried Obenreizer, striking in, filmless. "No. I had not told Miss Marguerite. The world is so small and so monotonous that a surprise is worth having in such a little jog-trot place. It is as he tells you, Miss Marguerite. He, of so fine a family, and so proudly bred, has condescended to trade. To trade! Like us poor peasants who have risen from ditches!"

A cloud crept over the fair brow, and she cast down her eyes.

"Why, it is good for trade!" pursued Obenreizer, enthusiastically. "It ennobles trade! It is the misfortune of trade, it is its vulgarity, that any low people—for example, we poor peasants—may take to it and climb by it. See you, my dear Vendale!" He spoke with great energy. "The father of Miss Marguerite, my eldest half-brother, more than two times your age or mine, if living now, wandered without shoes, almost without rags, from that wretched Pass—wandered—wandered—got to be fed with the mules and dogs at an Inn in the main valley far away—got to be Boy there—got to be Ostler—got to be Waiter—got to be Cook—got to be Landlord. As Landlord, he took me (could he take the idiot beggar his brother, or the spinning monstrosity his sister?) to put as pupil to the famous watchmaker, his neighbour and friend. His wife dies when Miss Marguerite is born. What is his will, and what are his words, to me, when *he* dies, she being between girl and woman? 'All for Marguerite, except so much by the year for you. You are young, but I make her your ward, for you were of the obscurest and the poorest peasantry, and so was I, and so was her mother; we were abject peasants all, and you will remember it.' The thing is equally true of most of my countrymen, now in trade in this your London quarter of Soho. Peasants once; low-born drudging Swiss Peasants. Then how good and great for trade: here, from having been warm, he became playfully jubilant, and touched the young wine-merchant's elbows again with his light embrace: 'to be exalted by gentlemen!'"

"I do not think so," said Marguerite, with a flushed cheek, and a look away from the visitor, that was almost defiant. "I think it is as much exalted by us peasants."

"Fie, fie, Miss Marguerite," said Obenreizer. "You speak in proud England."

"I speak in proud earnest," she answered, quietly resuming her work, "and I am not English, but a Swiss peasant's daughter."

There was a dismissal of the subject in her words, which Vendale could not contend against. He only said in an earnest manner, "I most heartily agree with you, Miss Obenreizer, and I have already said so, as Mr. Obenreizer will bear witness," which he by no means did, "in this house."

Now, Vendale's eyes were quick eyes, and sharply watching Madame Dor by times, noted something in the broad back view of that lady. There was considerable pantomimic expression in her glove-cleaning. It had been very softly done when he spoke with Marguerite, or it had altogether stopped, like the action of a listener. When Obenreizer's peasant-speech came to an end, she rubbed most vigorously, as if applauding it. And once or twice, as the glove (which she always held before her, a little above her face) turned in the air, or as this finger went down, or that went up, he even fancied that it made some telegraphic communication to Obenreizer: whose back was certainly never turned upon it, though he did not seem at all to heed it.

Vendale observed, too, that in Marguerite's dismissal of the subject twice forced upon him to his misrepresentation, there was an indignant treatment of her guardian which she tried to check: as though she would have flamed out against him, but for the influence of fear. He also observed—though this was not much—that he never advanced within the distance of her at which he first placed himself: as though there were limits fixed between them. Neither had he ever spoken of her without the prefix "Miss," though whenever he uttered it, it was with the faintest trace of an air of mockery. And now it occurred to Vendale for the first time that something curious in the man which he had never before been able to define, was definable as a certain subtle essence of mockery that eluded touch or analysis. He felt convinced that Marguerite was in some sort a prisoner as to her free will—though she held her own against those two combined, by the force of her character, which was nevertheless inadequate to her release. To feel convinced of this, was not to feel less disposed to love her than he had always been. In a word, he was desperately in love with her, and thoroughly determined to pursue the opportunity which had opened at last.

For the present, he merely touched upon the pleasure that Wilding and Co. would soon have in entreating Miss Obenreizer to honour their establishment with her presence—a curious old place, though a bachelor house withal—and so did not protract his visit beyond such a visit's ordinary length. Going down stairs, conducted

by his host, he found the Obenreizer counting-house at the back of the entrance-hall, and several shabby men in outlandish garments, hanging about, whom Obenreizer put aside that he might pass, with a few words in *patois*.

"Countrymen," he explained, as he attended Vendale to the door. "Poor compatriots. Grateful and attached, like dogs! Good-bye. To meet again. So glad!"

Two more light touches on his elbows dismissed him into the street.

Sweet Marguerite at her frame, and Madame Dor's broad back at her telegraph, floated before him to Cripple Corner. On his arrival there, Wilding was closeted with Bintrey. The cellar doors happening to be open, Vendale lighted a candle in a cleft stick, and went down for a cellarous stroll. Graceful Marguerite floated before him faithfully, but Madame Dor's broad back remained outside.

The vaults were very spacious, and very old. There had been a stone crypt down there, when bygones were not bygones; some said, part of a monkish refectory; some said, of a chapel; some said, of a Pagan temple. It was all one now. Let who would, make what he liked of a crumbled pillar and a broken arch or so. Old Time had made what *he* liked of it, and was quite indifferent to contradiction.

The close air, the musty smell, and the thunderous rumbling in the streets above, as being out of the routine of ordinary life, went well enough with the picture of pretty Marguerite holding her own against those two. So Vendale went on until, at a turning in the vaults, he saw a light like the light he carried.

"Oh! You are here, are you, Joey?"

"Oughtn't it rather to go, 'Oh! You're here, are you, Master George?' For it's my business to be here. But it ain't yourn."

"Don't grumble, Joey."

"Oh! I don't grumble," returned the Cellarman. "If anything grumbles, it's what I've took in through the pores; it ain't me. Have a care as something in *you* don't begin a-grumbling, Master George. Stop here long enough for the wapours to work, and they'll be at it."

His present occupation consisted of poking his head into the bins, making measurements and mental calculations, and entering them in a rhinoceros-hide-looking note-book, like a piece of himself.

"They'll be at it," he resumed, laying the wooden rod that he measured with, across two casks, entering his last calculation, and straightening his back, "trust 'em! And so you've regularly come into the business, Master George?"

"Regularly. I hope you don't object, Joey?"

"I don't, bless you. But Wapours objects that you're too young. You're both on you too young."

"We shall get over that objection day by day, Joey."

"Aye, Master George; but I shall day by day get over the objection that I'm too old, and

so I shan't be capable of seeing much improvement in you."

The retort so tickled Joey Ladle that he grunted forth a laugh and delivered it again, grunting forth another laugh after the second edition of "improvement in you."

"But what's no laughing matter, Master George," he resumed, straightening his back once more, "is, that Young Master Wilding has gone and changed the luck. Mark my words. He has changed the luck, and he'll find it out. I ain't been down here all my life for nothing! I know by what I notices down here, when it's a-going to rain, when it's a-going to hold up, when it's a-going to blow, when it's a-going to be calm. I know, by what I notices down here, when the luck's changed, quite as well."

"Has this growth on the roof anything to do with your divination?" asked Vendale, holding his light towards a gloomy ragged growth of dark fungus, pendent from the arches with a very disagreeable and repellent effect. "We are famous for this growth in this vault, aren't we?"

"We are, Master George," replied Joey Ladle, moving a step or two away, "and if you'll be advised by me, you'll let it alone."

Taking up the rod just now laid across the two casks, and faintly moving the languid fungus with it, Vendale asked, "Aye, indeed? Why so?"

"Why, not so much because it rises from the casks of wine, and may leave you to judge what sort of stuff a Cellarman takes into himself when he walks in the same all the days of his life, nor yet so much because at a stage of its growth it's maggots, and you'll fetch 'em down upon you," returned Joey Ladle, still keeping away, "as for another reason, Master George."

"What other reason?"

"(I wouldn't keep on touchin' it, if I was you, sir.) I'll tell you if you'll come out of the place. First, take a look at its colour, Master George."

"I am doing so."

"Done, sir. Now, come out of the place."

He moved away with his light, and Vendale followed with his. When Vendale came up with him, and they were going back together, Vendale, eyeing him as they walked through the arches, said: "Well, Joey? The colour."

"Is it like clotted blood, Master George?"

"Like enough, perhaps."

"More than enough, I think," muttered Joey Ladle, shaking his head solemnly.

"Well, say it is like; say it is exactly like. What then?"

"Master George, they do say——"

"Who?"

"How should I know who?" rejoined the Cellarman, apparently much exasperated by the unreasonable nature of the question. "Them! Them as says pretty well everything, you know. How should I know who They are, if you don't?"

"True. Go on."

"They do say that the man that gets by any

accident a piece of that dark growth right upon his breast, will, for sure and certain, die by Murder."

As Vendale laughingly stopped to meet the Cellarman's eyes, which he had fastened on his light while dreamily saying those words, he suddenly became conscious of being struck upon his own breast by a heavy hand. Instantly following with his eyes the action of the hand that struck him—which was his companion's—he saw that it had beaten off his breast a web or clot of the fungus, even then floating to the ground.

For a moment he turned upon the cellarman almost as scared a look as the cellarman turned upon him. But in another moment they had reached the daylight at the foot of the cellar-steps, and before he cheerfully sprang up them, he blew out his candle and the superstition together.

EXIT WILDING.

On the morning of the next day, Wilding went out alone, after leaving a message with his clerk. "If Mr. Vendale should ask for me," he said, "or if Mr. Bintrey should call, tell them I am gone to the Foundling." All that his partner had said to him, all that his lawyer, following on the same side, could urge, had left him persisting unshaken in his own point of view. To find the lost man, whose place he had usurped, was now the paramount interest of his life, and to inquire at the Foundling was plainly to take the first step in the direction of discovery. To the Foundling, accordingly, the wine-merchant now went.

The once-familiar aspect of the building was altered to him, as the look of the portrait over the chimney-piece was altered to him. His one dearest association with the place which had sheltered his childhood had been broken away from it for ever. A strange reluctance possessed him, when he stated his business at the door. His heart ached as he sat alone in the waiting-room while the Treasurer of the institution was being sent for to see him. When the interview began, it was only by a painful effort that he could compose himself sufficiently to mention the nature of his errand.

The Treasurer listened with a face which promised all needful attention, and promised nothing more.

"We are obliged to be cautious," he said, when it came to his turn to speak, "about all inquiries which are made by strangers."

"You can hardly consider me a stranger," answered Wilding, simply. "I was one of your poor lost children here, in the bygone time."

The Treasurer politely rejoined that this circumstance inspired him with a special interest in his visitor. But he pressed, nevertheless, for that visitor's motive in making his inquiry. Without further preface, Wilding told him his motive, suppressing nothing.

The Treasurer rose, and led the way into the room in which the registers of the institution

were kept. "All the information which our books can give is heartily at your service," he said. "After the time that has elapsed, I am afraid it is the only information we have to offer you."

The books were consulted, and the entry was found, expressed as follows:

"3rd March, 1836. Adopted, and removed from the Foundling Hospital, a male infant, named Walter Wilding. Name and condition of the person adopting the child—Mrs. Jane Ann Miller, widow. Address—Lime-Tree Lodge, Groombridge Wells. References—the Reverend John Harker, Groombridge Wells; and Messrs. Giles, Jeremie, and Giles, bankers, Lombard-street."

"Is that all?" asked the wine-merchant. "Had you no after-communication with Mrs. Miller?"

"None—or some reference to it must have appeared in this book."

"May I take a copy of the entry?"

"Certainly! You are a little agitated. Let me make the copy for you."

"My only chance, I suppose," said Wilding, looking sadly at the copy, "is to inquire at Mrs. Miller's residence, and to try if her references can help me?"

"That is the only chance I see at present," answered the Treasurer. "I heartily wish I could have been of some further assistance to you."

With those farewell words to comfort him, Wilding set forth on the journey of investigation which began from the Foundling doors. The first stage to make for, was plainly the house of business of the bankers in Lombard-street. Two of the partners in the firm were inaccessible to chance-visitors when he asked for them. The third, after raising certain inevitable difficulties, consented to let a clerk examine the Ledger marked with the initial letter "M." The account of Mrs. Miller, widow, of Groombridge Wells, was found. Two long lines, in faded ink, were drawn across it; and at the bottom of the page there appeared this note: "Account closed, September 30th, 1837."

So the first stage of the journey was reached—and so it ended in No Thoroughfare! After sending a note to Cripple Corner to inform his partner that his absence might be prolonged for some hours, Wilding took his place in the train, and started for the second stage on the journey—Mrs. Miller's residence at Groombridge Wells.

Mothers and children travelled with him; mothers and children met each other at the station; mothers and children were in the shops when he entered them to inquire for Lime-Tree Lodge. Everywhere, the nearest and dearest of human relations showed itself happily in the happy light of day. Everywhere, he was reminded of the treasured delusion from which he had been awakened so cruelly—of the lost memory which had passed from him like a reflection from a glass.

Inquiring here, inquiring there, he could hear

of no such place as Lime-Tree Lodge. Passing a house-agent's office, he went in wearily, and put the question for the last time. The house-agent pointed across the street to a dreary mansion of many windows, which might have been a manufactory, but which was an hotel. "That's where Lime-Tree Lodge stood, sir," said the man, "ten years ago."

The second stage reached, and No Thoroughfare again!

But one chance was left. The clerical reference, Mr. Harker, still remained to be found. Customers coming in at the moment to occupy the house-agent's attention, Wilding went down the street, and, entering a bookseller's shop, asked if he could be informed of the Reverend John Harker's present address.

The bookseller looked unaffectedly shocked and astonished, and made no answer.

Wilding repeated his question.

The bookseller took up from his counter a prim little volume in a binding of sober grey. He handed it to his visitor, open at the title-page. Wilding read:

"The martyrdom of the Reverend John Harker in New Zealand. Related by a former member of his flock."

Wilding put the book down on the counter. "I beg your pardon," he said, thinking a little, perhaps, of his own present martyrdom while he spoke. The silent bookseller acknowledged the apology by a bow. Wilding went out.

Third and last stage, and No Thoroughfare for the third and last time.

There was nothing more to be done; there was absolutely no choice but to go back to London, defeated at all points. From time to time on the return journey, the wine-merchant looked at his copy of the entry in the Foundling Register. There is one among the many forms of despair—perhaps the most pitiable of all—which persists in disguising itself as Hope. Wilding checked himself in the act of throwing the useless morsel of paper out of the carriage window. "It may lead to something yet," he thought. "While I live, I won't part with it. When I die, my executors shall find it sealed up with my will."

Now, the mention of his will set the good wine-merchant on a new track of thought, without diverting his mind from its engrossing subject. He must make his will immediately.

The application of the phrase No Thoroughfare to the case had originated with Mr. Bintrey. In their first long conference following the discovery, that sagacious personage had a hundred times repeated, with an obstructive shake of the head, "No Thoroughfare, Sir, No Thoroughfare. My belief is that there is no way out of this at this time of day, and my advice is, make yourself comfortable where you are."

In the course of the protracted consultation, a magnum of the forty-five-year-old port wine had been produced for the wetting of Mr. Bintrey's legal whistle; but the more clearly he saw his way through the wine, the more emphatically

he did not see his way through the case; repeating as often as he set his glass down empty, "Mr. Wilding, No Thoroughfare. Rest and be thankful."

It is certain that the honest wine-merchant's anxiety to make a will, originated in profound conscientiousness; though it is possible (and quite consistent with his rectitude) that he may unconsciously have derived some feeling of relief from the prospect of delegating his own difficulty to two other men who were to come after him. Be that as it may, he pursued his new track of thought with great ardour, and lost no time in begging George Vendale and Mr. Bintrey to meet him in Cripple Corner and share his confidence.

"Being all three assembled with closed doors," said Mr. Bintrey, addressing the new partner on the occasion, "I wish to observe, before our friend (and my client) entrusts us with his further views, that I have endorsed what I understand from him to have been your advice, Mr. Vendale, and what would be the advice of every sensible man. I have told him that he positively must keep his secret. I have spoken with Mrs. Goldstraw, both in his presence and in his absence; and if anybody is to be trusted (which is a very large IF), I think she is to be trusted to that extent. I have pointed out to our friend (and my client), that to set on foot random inquiries would not only be to raise the Devil, in the likeness of all the swindlers in the kingdom, but would also be to waste the estate. Now, you see, Mr. Vendale, our friend (and my client) does not desire to waste the estate, but, on the contrary, desires to husband it for what he considers—but I can't say I do—the rightful owner, if such rightful owner should ever be found. I am very much mistaken if he ever will be, but never mind that. Mr. Wilding and I are, at least, agreed that the estate is not to be wasted. Now, I have yielded to Mr. Wilding's desire to keep an advertisement at intervals flowing through the newspapers, cautiously inviting any person who may know anything about that adopted infant, taken from the Foundling Hospital, to come to my office; and I have pledged myself that such advertisement shall regularly appear. I have gathered from our friend (and my client) that I meet you here to-day to take his instructions, not to give him advice. I am prepared to receive his instructions, and to respect his wishes; but you will please observe that this does not imply my approval of either as a matter of professional opinion."

Thus Mr. Bintrey; talking quite as much *à* Wilding as *to* Vendale. And yet, in spite of his care for his client, he was so amused by his client's Quixotic conduct, as to eye him from time to time with twinkling eyes, in the light of a highly comical curiosity.

"Nothing," observed Wilding, "can be clearer. I only wish my head were as clear as yours, Mr. Bintrey."

"If you feel that singing in it, coming on," hinted the lawyer, with an alarmed glance, "put it off.—I mean the interview."

"Not at all, I thank you," said Wilding. "What was I going to—"

"Don't excite yourself, Mr. Wilding," urged the lawyer.

"No; I *wasn't* going to," said the wine-merchant. "Mr. Bintrey and George Vendale, would you have any hesitation or objection to become my joint trustees and executors, or can you at once consent?"

"I consent," replied George Vendale, readily.

"I consent," said Bintrey, not so readily.

"Thank you both. Mr. Bintrey, my instructions for my last will and testament are short and plain. Perhaps you will now have the goodness to take them down. I leave the whole of my real and personal estate, without any exception or reservation whatsoever, to you two, my joint trustees and executors, in trust to pay over the whole to the true Walter Wilding, if he shall be found and identified within two years after the day of my death. Failing that, in trust to you two to pay over the whole as a benefaction and legacy to the Foundling Hospital."

"Those are all your instructions, are they, Mr. Wilding?" demanded Bintrey, after a blank silence, during which nobody had looked at anybody.

"The whole."

"And as to those instructions, you have absolutely made up your mind, Mr. Wilding?"

"Absolutely, decidedly, finally."

"It only remains," said the lawyer, with one shrug of his shoulders, "to get them into technical and binding form, and to execute and attest. Now, does that press? Is there any hurry about it? You are not going to die yet, sir."

"Mr. Bintrey," answered Wilding, gravely, "when I am going to die is within other knowledge than yours or mine. I shall be glad to have this matter off my mind, if you please."

"We are lawyer and client again," rejoined Bintrey, who, for the nonce, had become almost sympathetic. "If this day week—here, at the same hour—will suit Mr. Vendale and yourself, I will enter in my Diary that I attend you accordingly."

The appointment was made, and in due sequence kept. The will was formally signed, sealed, delivered, and witnessed, and was carried off by Mr. Bintrey for safe storage among the papers of his clients, ranged in their respective iron boxes, with their respective owners' names outside, on iron tiers in his consulting-room, as if that legal sanctuary were a condensed Family Vault of Clients.

With more heart than he had lately had for former subjects of interest, Wilding then set about completing his patriarchal establishment, being much assisted not only by Mrs. Goldstraw but by Vendale too: who, perhaps, had in his mind the giving of an Obenreizer dinner as soon as possible. Anyhow, the establishment being reported in sound working order, the Obenreizers, Guardian and Ward, were asked to

dinner, and Madame Dor was included in the invitation. If Vendale had been over head and ears in love before—a phrase not to be taken as implying the faintest doubt about it—this dinner plunged him down in love ten thousand fathoms deep. Yet, for the life of him, he could not get one word alone with charming Marguerite. So surely as a blessed moment seemed to come, Obenreizer, in his filmy state, would stand at Vendale's elbow, or the broad back of Madame Dor would appear before his eyes. That speechless matron was never seen in a front view, from the moment of her arrival to that of her departure—except at dinner. And from the instant of her retirement to the drawing-room, after a hearty participation in that meal, she turned her face to the wall again.

Yet, through four or five delightful though distracting hours, Marguerite was to be seen, Marguerite was to be heard, Marguerite was to be occasionally touched. When they made the round of the old dark cellars, Vendale led her by the hand; when she sang to him in the lighted room at night, Vendale, standing by her, held her relinquished gloves, and would have bartered against them every drop of the forty-five year old, though it had been forty-five times forty-five years old, and its nett price forty-five times forty-five pounds per dozen. And still, when she was gone, and a great gap of an extinguisher was clapped on Cripple Corner, he tormented himself by wondering, Did she think that he admired her! Did she think that he adored her! Did she suspect that she had won him, heart and soul! Did she care to think at all about it! And so, Did she and Didn't she, up and down the gamut, and above the line and below the line, dear, dear! Poor restless heart of humanity! To think that the men who were mummies thousands of years ago, did the same, and ever found the secret how to be quiet after it!

"What do you think, George," Wilding asked him next day, "of Mr. Obenreizer? (I wont ask you what you think of Miss Obenreizer)."

"I don't know," said Vendale, "and I never did know, what to think of him."

"He is well informed and clever," said Wilding.

"Certainly clever."

"A good musician." (He had played very well, and sung very well, overnight.)

"Unquestionably a good musician."

"And talks well."

"Yes," said George Vendale, ruminating, "and talks well. Do you know, Wilding, it oddly occurs to me, as I think about him, that he doesn't keep silence well!"

"How do you mean? He is not obtrusively talkative."

"No, and I don't mean that. But when he is silent, you can hardly help vaguely, though perhaps most unjustly, mistrusting him. Take people whom you know and like. Take any one you know and like."

"Soon done, my good fellow," said Wilding. "I take you."

"I didn't bargain for that, or foresee it," returned Vendale, laughing. "However, take me. Reflect for a moment. Is your approving knowledge of my interesting face, mainly founded (however various the momentary expressions it may include) on my face when I am silent?"

"I think it is," said Wilding.

"I think so too. Now, you see, when Obenreizer speaks—in other words, when he is allowed to explain himself away—he comes out right enough; but when he has not the opportunity of explaining himself away, he comes out rather wrong. Therefore it is, that I say he does not keep silence well. And passing hastily in review such faces as I know, and don't trust, I am inclined to think, now I give my mind to it, that none of them keep silence well."

This proposition in Physiognomy being new to Wilding, he was at first slow to admit it, until asking himself the question whether Mrs. Goldstraw kept silence well, and remembering that her face in repose decidedly invited trustfulness, he was as glad as men usually are to believe what they desire to believe.

But, as he was very slow to regain his spirits or his health, his partner, as another means of setting him up—and perhaps also with contingent Obenreizer views—reminded him of those musical schemes of his in connexion with his family, and how a singing-class was to be formed in the house, and a Choir in a neighbouring church. The class was established speedily, and, two or three of the people having already some musical knowledge, and singing tolerably, the Choir soon followed. The latter was led and chiefly taught, by Wilding himself: who had hopes of converting his dependents into so many Foundlings, in respect of their capacity to sing sacred choruses.

Now, the Obenreizers being skilled musicians it was easily brought to pass that they should be asked to join these musical unions. Guardian and Ward consenting, or Guardian consenting for both, it was necessarily brought to pass that Vendale's life became a life of absolute thralldom and enchantment. For, in the mouldy Christopher-Wren church on Sundays, with its dearly beloved brethren assembled and met together, five-and-twenty strong, was not that Her voice that shot like light into the darkest places, thrilling the walls and pillars as though they were pieces of his heart! What time, too, Madame Dor in a corner of the high pew, turning her back upon everybody and everything, could not fail to be Ritualistically right at some moment of the service; like the man whom the doctors recommended to get drunk once a month, and who, that he might not overlook it, got drunk every day.

But, even those seraphic Sundays were surpassed by the Wednesday concerts established for the patriarchal family. At those concerts she would sit down to the piano and sing them, in her own tongue, songs of her own land, songs calling from the mountain-tops to Vendale, "Rise above the grovelling level country; come far away from the crowd; pursue me as I mount higher, higher, higher,

melting into the azure distance; rise to my supremest height of all, and love me here!" Then would the pretty bodice, the clocked stocking, and the silver-buckled shoe be, like the broad forehead and the bright eyes, fraught with the spring of a very chamois, until the strain was over.

Not even over Vendale himself did these songs of hers cast a more potent spell than over Joey Lade in his different way. Steadily refusing to muddle the harmony by taking any share in it, and evincing the supremest contempt for scales and such like rudiments of music—which, indeed, seldom captivate mere listeners—Joey did at first give up the whole business for a bad job, and the whole of the performers for a set of howling Derivishes. But, desecrating traces of unmuddled harmony in a part-song one day, he gave his two under-cellarmen faint hopes of getting on towards something in course of time. An anthem of Handel's led to further encouragement from him: though he objected that that great musician must have been down in some of them foreign cellars pretty much, for to go and say the same thing so many times over; which, took it in how you might, he considered a certain sign of your having took it in somehow. On a third occasion, the public appearance of Mr. Jarvis with a flute, and of an odd man with a violin, and the performance of a duet by the two, did so astonish him that, solely of his own impulse and motion, he became inspired with the words, "Ann Koar!" repeatedly pronouncing them as if calling in a familiar manner for some lady who had distinguished herself in the orchestra. But this was his final testimony to the merits of his mates, for, the instrumental duet being performed at the first Wednesday concert, and being presently followed by the voice of Marguerite Obenreizer, he sat with his mouth wide open, entranced, until she had finished; when, rising in his place with much solemnity, and prefacing what he was about to say with a bow that specially included Mr. Wilding in it, he delivered himself of the gratifying sentiment: "Arter that, ye may all on ye get to bed!" And ever afterwards declined to render homage in any other words to the musical powers of the family.

Thus began a separate personal acquaintance between Marguerite Obenreizer and Joey Lade. She laughed so heartily at his compliment, and yet was so abashed by it, that Joey made bold to say to her, after the concert was over, he hoped he wasn't so muddled in his head as to have took a liberty? She made him a gracious reply, and Joey ducked in return.

"You'll change the luck time about, Miss," said Joey, ducking again. "It's such as you n the place that can bring round the luck of the place."

"Can I? Round the luck?" she answered, in her pretty English, and with a pretty wonder. "I fear I do not understand. I am so stupid."

"Young Master Wilding, Miss," Joey ex-

plained confidentially, though not much to her enlightenment, "changed the luck, afore he took in young Master George. So I say, and so they'll find. Lord! Only come into the place and sing over the luck a few times, Miss, and it won't be able to help itself!"

With this, and with a whole brood of ducks, Joey backed out of the presence. But Joey being a privileged person, and even an involuntary conquest being pleasant to youth and beauty, Marguerite merrily looked out for him next time.

"Where is my Mr. Joey, please?" she asked of Vendale.

So Joey was produced and shaken hands with, and that became an Institution.

Another Institution arose in this wise. Joey was a little hard of hearing. He himself said it was "Wapours," and perhaps it might have been; but whatever the cause of the effect, there the effect was, upon him. On this first occasion he had been seen to sidle along the wall, with his left hand to his left ear, until he had sidled himself into a seat pretty near the singer, in which place and position he had remained, until addressing to his friends the amateurs the compliment before mentioned. It was observed on the following Wednesday that Joey's action as a Pecking Machine was impaired at dinner, and it was rumoured about the table that this was explainable by his high-strung expectations of Miss Obenreizer's singing, and his fears of not getting a place where he could hear every note and syllable. The rumour reaching Wilding's ears, he in his good nature called Joey to the front at night before Marguerite began. Thus the Institution came into being that on succeeding nights, Marguerite, running her hands over the keys before singing, always said to Vendale, "Where is my Mr. Joey, please?" and that Vendale always brought him forth, and stationed him near by. That he should then, when all eyes were upon him, express in his face the utmost contempt for the exertions of his friends and confidence in Marguerite alone, whom he would stand contemplating, not unlike the rhinoceros out of the spelling-book, tamed and on his hind legs, was a part of the Institution. Also that when he remained after the singing in his most ecstatic state, some bold spirit from the back should say, "What do you think of it, Joey?" and he should be goaded to reply, as having that instant conceived the retort, "Arter that ye may all on ye get to bed!" These were other parts of the Institution.

But, the simple pleasures and small jests of Cripple Corner were not destined to have a long life. Underlying them from the first was a serious matter, which every member of the patriarchal family knew of, but which, by tacit agreement, all forbore to speak of. Mr. Wilding's health was in a bad way.

He might have overcome the shock he had sustained in the one great affection of his life, or he might have overcome his consciousness of being in the enjoyment of another man's pro-

perty; but the two together were too much for him. A man haunted by twin ghosts, he became deeply depressed. The inseparable spectres sat at the board with him, ate from his platter, drank from his cup, and stood by his bedside at night. When he recalled his supposed mother's love, he felt as though he had stolen it. When he rallied a little under the respect and attachment of his dependents, he felt as though he were even fraudulent in making them happy, for that should have been the unknown man's duty and gratification.

Gradually, under the pressure of his brooding mind, his body stooped, his step lost its elasticity, his eyes were seldom lifted from the ground. He knew he could not help the deplorable mistake that had been made, but he knew he could not mend it; for the days and weeks went by, and no one claimed his name or his possessions. And now there began to creep over him, a cloudy consciousness of often-recurring confusion in his head. He would unaccountably lose, sometimes whole hours, sometimes a whole day and night. Once, his remembrance stopped as he sat at the head of the dinner-table, and was blank until daybreak. Another time, it stopped as he was beating time to their singing, and went on again when he and his partner were walking in the courtyard by the light of the moon, half the night later. He asked Vendale (always full of consideration, work, and help) how this was? Vendale only replied, "You have not been quite well; that's all." He looked for explanation into the faces of his people. But they would put it off with, "Glad to see you looking so much better, sir;" or "Hope you're doing nicely now, sir;" in which was no information at all.

At length, when the partnership was but five months old, Walter Wilding took to his bed, and his housekeeper became his nurse.

"Lying here, perhaps you will not mind my calling you Sally, Mrs. Goldstraw?" said the poor wine-merchant.

"It sounds more natural to me, sir, than any other name, and I like it better."

"Thank you, Sally. I think, Sally, I must of late have been subject to fits. Is that so, Sally? Don't mind telling me now."

"It has happened, sir."

"Ah! That is the explanation!" he quietly remarked. "Mr. Obenreizer, Sally, talks of the world being so small that it is not strange how often the same people come together, and come together, at various places, and in various stages of life. But it does seem strange, Sally, that I should, as I may say, come round to the Foundling to die."

He extended his hand to her, and she gently took it.

"You are not going to die, dear Mr. Wilding."

"So Mr. Bintrey said, but I think he was wrong. The old child-feeling is coming back upon me, Sally. The old hush and rest, as I used to fall asleep."

After an interval he said, in a placid voice, "Please kiss me, Nurse," and, it was evident, believed himself to be lying in the old Dormitory.

As she had been used to bend over the fatherless and motherless children, Sally bent over the fatherless and motherless man, and put her lips to his forehead, murmuring:

"God bless you!"

"God bless you!" he replied, in the same tone.

After another interval, he opened his eyes in his own character, and said: "Don't move me, Sally, because of what I am going to say; I lie quite easily. I think my time is come. I don't know how it may appear to you, Sally, but——"

Insensibility fell upon him for a few minutes; he emerged from it once more.

"—I don't know how it may appear to you, Sally, but so it appears to me."

When he had thus conscientiously finished his favourite sentence, his time came, and he died.

ACT II.

VENDALE MAKES LOVE.

The summer and the autumn had passed. Christmas and the New Year were at hand.

As executors honestly bent on performing their duty towards the dead, Vendale and Bintrey had held more than one anxious consultation on the subject of Wilding's will. The lawyer had declared, from the first, that it was simply impossible to take any useful action in the matter at all. The only obvious inquiries to make, in relation to the lost man, had been made already by Wilding himself; with this result, that time and death together had not left a trace of him discoverable. To advertise for the claimant to the property, it would be necessary to mention particulars—a course of proceeding which would invite half the impostors in England to present themselves in the character of the true Walter Wilding. "If we find a chance of tracing the lost man, we will take it. If we don't, let us meet for another consultation on the first anniversary of Wilding's death." So Bintrey advised. And so, with the most earnest desire to fulfil his dead friend's wishes, Vendale was fain to let the matter rest for the present.

Turning from his interest in the past to his interest in the future, Vendale still found himself confronting a doubtful prospect. Months on months had passed since his first visit to Soho-square—and through all that time, the one language in which he had told Marguerite that he loved her was the language of the eyes, assisted, at convenient opportunities, by the language of the hand.

What was the obstacle in his way? The one immovable obstacle which had been in his way from the first. No matter how fairly the opportunities looked, Vendale's efforts to speak with Marguerite alone, ended invariably in one and the same result. Under the most accidental circumstances, in the most innocent manner possible, Obenreizer was always in the way.

With the last days of the old year came an unexpected chance of spending an evening with

Marguerite, which Vendale resolved should be a chance of speaking privately to her as well. A cordial note from Obenreizer invited him, on New Year's Day, to a little family dinner in Soho-square. "We shall be only four," the note said. "We shall be only two," Vendale determined, "before the evening is out!"

New Year's Day, among the English, is associated with the giving and receiving of dinners, and with nothing more, New Year's Day, among the foreigners, is the grand opportunity of the year for the giving and receiving of presents. It is occasionally possible to acclimatise a foreign custom. In this instance Vendale felt no hesitation about making the attempt. His one difficulty was to decide what his New Year's gift to Marguerite should be. The defensive pride of the peasant's daughter—morbidly sensitive to the inequality between her social position and his—would be secretly roused against him if he ventured on a rich offering. A gift, which a poor man's purse might purchase, was the one gift that could be trusted to find its way to her heart, for the giver's sake. Stoutly resisting temptation, in the form of diamonds and rubies, Vendale bought a brooch of the flaggee-work of Genoa—the simplest and most unpretending ornament that he could find in the jeweller's shop.

He slipped his gift into Marguerite's hand as she held it out to welcome him on the day of the dinner.

"This is your first New Year's Day in England," he said. "Will you let me help to make it like a New Year's Day at home?"

She thanked him, a little constrainedly, as she looked at the jeweller's box, uncertain what it might contain. Opening the box, and discovering the studiously simple form under which Vendale's little keepsake offered itself to her, she penetrated his motive on the spot. Her face turned on him brightly, with a look which said, "I own you have pleased and flattered me." Never had she been so charming, in Vendale's eyes, as she was at that moment. Her winter dress—a petticoat of dark silk, with a bodice of black velvet rising to her neck, and enclosing it softly in a little circle of swansdown—heightened, by all the force of contrast, the dazzling fairness of her hair and her complexion. It was only when she turned aside from him to the glass, and, taking out the brooch that she wore, put his New Year's gift in its place, that Vendale's attention wandered far enough away from her to discover the presence of other persons in the room. He now became conscious that the hands of Obenreizer were affectionately in possession of his elbows. He now heard the voice of Obenreizer thanking him for his attention to Marguerite, with the faintest possible ring of mockery in its tone. ("Such a simple present, dear sir! and showing such nice tact!") He now discovered, for the first time, that there was one other guest, and but one, besides himself, whom Obenreizer presented as a compatriot and friend. The friend's face was mouldy, and the friend's figure was fat. His age was suggestive of the autumnal period of human life.

In the course of the evening he developed two extraordinary capacities. One was a capacity for silence; the other was a capacity for emptying bottles.

Madame Dor was not in the room. Neither was there any visible place reserved for her when they sat down to table. Obenreizer explained that it was "the good Dor's simple habit to dine always in the middle of the day. She would make her excuses later in the evening." Vendale wondered whether the good Dor had, on this occasion, varied her domestic employment from cleaning Obenreizer's gloves to cooking Obenreizer's dinner. This at least was certain—the dishes served were, one and all, as achievements in cookery, high above the reach of the rude elementary art of England. The dinner was unobtrusively perfect. As for the wine, the eyes of the speechless friend rolled over it, as in solemn ecstasy. Sometimes he said "Good!" when a bottle came in full; and sometimes he said "Ah!" when a bottle went out empty—and there his contributions to the gaiety of the evening ended.

Silence is occasionally infectious. Oppressed by private anxieties of their own, Marguerite and Vendale appeared to feel the influence of the speechless friend. The whole responsibility of keeping the talk going rested on Obenreizer's shoulders, and manfully did Obenreizer sustain it. He opened his heart in the character of an enlightened foreigner, and sang the praises of England. When other topics ran dry, he returned to this inexhaustible source, and always set the stream running again as copiously as ever. Obenreizer would have given an arm, an eye, or a leg to have been born an Englishman. Out of England there was no such institution as a home, no such thing as a fireside, no such object as a beautiful woman. His dear Miss Marguerite would excuse him, if he accounted for her attractions on the theory that English blood must have mixed at some former time with their obscure and unknown ancestry. Survey this English nation, and behold a tall, clean, plump, and solid people! Look at their cities! What magnificence in their public buildings! What admirable order and propriety in their streets! Admire their laws, combining the eternal principle of justice with the other eternal principle of pounds, shillings, and pence; and applying the product to all civil injuries, from an injury to a man's honour, to an injury to a man's nose! You have ruined my daughter—pounds, shillings, and pence! You have knocked me down with a blow in my face—pounds, shillings, and pence! Where was the material prosperity of such a country as *that* to stop? Obenreizer, projecting himself into the future, failed to see the end of it. Obenreizer's enthusiasm entreated permission to exhale itself, English fashion, in a toast. Here is our modest little dinner over, here is our frugal dessert on the table, and here is the admirer of England conforming to national customs, and making a speech! A toast to your white cliffs of Albion, Mr. Vendale! to your national virtues, your charming climate,

and your fascinating women! to your Hearths, to your Homes, to your Habeas Corpus, and to all your other institutions! In one word—to England! Heep—heep—heep! hooray!

Obenreizer's voice had barely chanted the last note of the English cheer, the speechless friend had barely drained the last drop out of his glass, when the festive proceedings were interrupted by a modest tap at the door. A woman-servant came in, and approached her master with a little note in her hand. Obenreizer opened the note with a frown; and, after reading it with an expression of genuine annoyance, passed it on to his compatriot and friend. Vendale's spirits rose as he watched these proceedings. Had he found an ally in the annoying little note? Was the long-looked-for chance actually coming at last?

"I am afraid there is no help for it," said Obenreizer, addressing his fellow-countryman. "I am afraid we must go."

The speechless friend handed back the letter, shrugged his heavy shoulders, and poured himself out a last glass of wine. His fat fingers lingered fondly round the neck of the bottle. They pressed it with a little amatory squeeze at parting. His globular eyes looked dimly, as through an intervening haze, at Vendale and Marguerite. His heavy articulation laboured, and brought forth a whole sentence at a birth. "I think," he said, "I should have liked a little more wine." His breath failed him after that effort; he gasped, and walked to the door.

Obenreizer addressed himself to Vendale with an appearance of the deepest distress.

"I am so shocked, so confused, so distressed," he began. "A misfortune has happened to one of my compatriots. He is alone, he is ignorant of your language—I and my good friend, here, have no choice but to go and help him. What can I say in my excuse? How can I describe my affliction at depriving myself in this way of the honour of your company?"

He paused, evidently expecting to see Vendale take up his hat and retire. Discerning his opportunity at last, Vendale determined to do nothing of the kind. He met Obenreizer dexterously, with Obenreizer's own weapons.

"Pray don't distress yourself," he said. "I'll wait here with the greatest pleasure till you come back."

Marguerite blushed deeply, and turned away to her embroidery-frame in a corner by the window. The film showed itself in Obenreizer's eyes, and the smile came something sourly to Obenreizer's lips. To have told Vendale that there was no reasonable prospect of his coming back in good time would have been to risk offending a man whose favourable opinion was of solid commercial importance to him. Accepting his defeat with the best possible grace, he declared himself to be equally honoured and delighted by Vendale's proposal. "So frank, so friendly, so English!" He bustled about, apparently looking for something he wanted, disappeared for a moment through the folding-doors communicating with the next room, came back with his

hat and coat, and protesting that he would return at the earliest possible moment, embraced Vendale's elbows, and vanished from the scene in company with the speechless friend.

Vendale turned to the corner by the window, in which Marguerite had placed herself with her work. There, as if she had dropped from the ceiling, or come up through the floor—there, in the old attitude, with her face to the stove—sat an Obstacle that had not been foreseen, in the person of Madame Dor! She half got up, half looked over her broad shoulder at Vendale, and plumped down again. Was she at work? Yes. Cleaning Obenreizer's gloves, as before? No; darnning Obenreizer's stockings.

The case was now desperate. Two serious considerations presented themselves to Vendale. Was it possible to put Madame Dor into the stove? The stove wouldn't hold her. Was it possible to treat Madame Dor, not as a living woman, but as an article of furniture? Could the mind be brought to contemplate this respectable matron purely in the light of a chest of drawers, with a black gauze head-dress accidentally left on the top of it? Yes, the mind could be brought to do that. With a comparatively trifling effort, Vendale's mind did it. As he took his place on the old-fashioned window-seat, close by Marguerite and her embroidery, a slight movement appeared in the chest of drawers, but no remark issued from it. Let it be remembered that solid furniture is not easy to move, and that it has this advantage in consequence—there is no fear of upsetting it.

Unusually silent and unusually constrained—with the bright colour fast fading from her face, with a feverish energy possessing her fingers—the pretty Marguerite bent over her embroidery, and worked as if her life depended on it. Hardly less agitated himself, Vendale felt the importance of leading her very gently to the avowal which he was eager to make—to the other sweeter avowal still, which he was longing to hear. A woman's love is never to be taken by storm; it yields insensibly to a system of gradual approach. It ventures by the roundabout way, and listens to the low voice. Vendale led her memory back to their past meetings when they were travelling together in Switzerland. They revived the impressions, they recalled the events, of the happy bygone time. Little by little, Marguerite's constraint vanished. She smiled, she was interested, she looked at Vendale, she grew idle with her needle, she made false stitches in her work. Their voices sank lower and lower; their faces bent nearer and nearer to each other as they spoke. And Madame Dor? Madame Dor behaved like an angel. She never looked round; she never said a word; she went on with Obenreizer's stockings. Pulling each stocking up tight over her left arm, and holding that arm aloft from time to time, to catch the light on her work, there were moments, delicate and indescribable moments, when Madame Dor appeared to be sitting upside down, and contemplating one of her own respectable legs elevated in the air. As the minutes wore on, these

elevations followed each other at longer and longer intervals. Now and again, the black gauze head-dress nodded, dropped forward, recovered itself. A little heap of stockings slid softly from Madame Dor's lap, and remained unnoticed on the floor. A prodigious ball of worsted followed the stockings, and rolled lazily under the table. The black gauze head-dress nodded, dropped forward, recovered itself, nodded again, dropped forward again, and recovered itself no more. A composite sound, partly as of the purring of an immense cat, partly as of the planing of a soft board, rose over the hushed voices of the lovers, and hummed at regular intervals through the room. Nature and Madame Dor had combined together in Vendale's interests. The best of women was asleep.

Marguerite rose to stop—not the snoring—let us say, the audible repose of Madame Dor. Vendale laid his hand on her arm, and pressed her back gently into her chair.

"Don't disturb her," he whispered. "I have been waiting to tell you a secret. Let me tell it now."

Marguerite resumed her seat. She tried to resume her needle. It was useless; her eyes failed her; her hand failed her; she could find nothing.

"We have been talking," said Vendale, "of the happy time when we first met, and first travelled together. I have a confession to make. I have been concealing something. When we spoke of my first visit to Switzerland, I told you of all the impressions I had brought back with me to England—except one. Can you guess what that one is?"

Her eyes looked steadfastly at the embroidery, and her face turned a little away from him. Signs of disturbance began to appear in her neat velvet bodice, round the region of the brooch. She made no reply. Vendale pressed the question without mercy.

"Can you guess what the one Swiss impression is, which I have not told you yet?"

Her face turned back towards him, and a faint smile trembled on her lips.

"An impression of the mountains, perhaps?" she said, slyly.

"No; a much more precious impression than that."

"Of the lakes?"

"No. The lakes have not grown dearer and dearer in remembrance to me every day. The lakes are not associated with my happiness in the present, and my hopes in the future. Marguerite! all that makes life worth having hangs, for me, on a word from your lips. Marguerite! I love you!"

Her head drooped, as he took her hand. He drew her to him, and looked at her. The tears escaped from her downcast eyes, and fell slowly over her cheeks.

"Oh, Mr. Vendale," she said, sadly, "it would have been kinder to have kept your secret. Have you forgotten the distance between us? It can never, never, be!"

"There can be but one distance between us,

Marguerite—a distance of your making. My love, my darling, there is no higher rank in goodness, there is no higher rank in beauty, than yours! Come! whisper the one little word which tells me you will be my wife!"

She sighed bitterly. "Think of your family," she murmured; "and think of mine!"

Vendale drew her a little nearer to him.

"If you dwell on such an obstacle as that," he said, "I shall think but one thought—I shall think I have offended you."

She started, and looked up. "Oh, no!" she exclaimed, innocently. The instant the words passed her lips, she saw the construction that might be placed on them. Her confession had escaped her in spite of herself. A lovely flush of colour overspread her face. She made a momentary effort to disengage herself from her lover's embrace. She looked up at him entreatingly. She tried to speak. The words died on her lips in the kiss that Vendale pressed on them. "Let me go, Mr. Vendale!" she said, faintly.

"Call me George."

She laid her head on his bosom. All her heart went out to him at last. "George!" she whispered.

"Say you love me!"

Her arms twined themselves gently round his neck. Her lips, timidly touching his cheek, murmured the delicious words—"I love you!"

In the moment of silence that followed, the sound of the opening and closing of the house-door came clear to them through the wintry stillness of the street.

Marguerite started to her feet.

"Let me go!" she said. "He has come back!"

She hurried from the room, and touched Madame Dor's shoulder in passing. Madame Dor woke up with a loud snort, looked first over one shoulder and then over the other, peered down into her lap, and discovered neither stockings, worsted, nor darning-needle in it. At the same moment, footsteps became audible ascending the stairs. "Mon Dieu!" said Madame Dor, addressing herself to the stove, and trembling violently. Vendale picked up the stockings and the ball, and huddled them all back in a heap over her shoulder. "Mon Dieu!" said Madame Dor, for the second time, as the avalanche of worsted poured into her capacious lap.

The door opened, and Obenreizer came in. His first glance round the room showed him that Marguerite was absent.

"What!" he exclaimed, "my niece is away? My niece is not here to entertain you in my absence? This is unpardonable. I shall bring her back instantly."

Vendale stopped him.

"I beg you will not disturb Miss Obenreizer," he said. "You have returned, I see, without your friend?"

"My friend remains, and consoles our afflicted compatriot. A heart-rending scene, Mr. Vendale! The household gods at the pawnbroker's—the family immersed in tears. We all em-

braced in silence. My admirable friend alone possessed his composure. He sent out, on the spot, for a bottle of wine."

"Can I say a word to you in private, Mr. Obenreizer?"

"Assuredly." He turned to Madame Dor. "My good creature, you are sinking for want of repose. Mr. Vendale will excuse you."

Madame Dor rose, and set forth sideways on her journey from the stove to bed. She dropped a stocking. Vendale picked it up for her, and opened one of the folding-doors. She advanced a step, and dropped three more stockings. Vendale, stooping to recover them as before, Obenreizer interfered with profuse apologies, and with a warning look at Madame Dor. Madame Dor acknowledged the look by dropping the whole of the stockings in a heap, and then shuffling away panic-stricken from the scene of disaster. Obenreizer swept up the complete collection fiercely in both hands. "Go!" he cried, giving his prodigious handful a preparatory swing in the air. Madame Dor said, "Mon Dieu," and vanished into the next room, pursued by a shower of stockings.

"What must you think, Mr. Vendale," said Obenreizer, closing the door, "of this deplorable intrusion of domestic details? For myself, I blush at it. We are beginning the New Year as badly as possible; everything has gone wrong to-night. Be seated, pray—and say, what may I offer you? Shall we pay our best respects to another of your noble English institutions? It is my study to be, what you call, jolly. I propose a grog."

Vendale declined the grog with all needful respect for that noble institution.

"I wish to speak to you on a subject in which I am deeply interested," he said. "You must have observed, Mr. Obenreizer, that I have, from the first, felt no ordinary admiration for your charming niece?"

"You are very good. In my niece's name, I thank you."

"Perhaps you may have noticed, latterly, that my admiration for Miss Obenreizer has grown into a tenderer and deeper feeling——?"

"Shall we say friendship, Mr. Vendale?"

"Say love—and we shall be nearer to the truth."

Obenreizer started out of his chair. The faintly discernible beat, which was his nearest approach to a change of colour, showed itself suddenly in his cheeks.

"You are Miss Obenreizer's guardian," pursued Vendale. "I ask you to confer upon me the greatest of all favours—I ask you to give me her hand in marriage."

Obenreizer dropped back into his chair. "Mr. Vendale," he said, "you petrify me."

"I will wait," rejoined Vendale, "until you have recovered yourself."

"One word before I recover myself. You have said nothing about this to my niece?"

"I have opened my whole heart to your niece. And I have reason to hope——"

"What!" interposed Obenreizer. "You have made a proposal to my niece, without first ask-

ing for my authority to pay your addresses to her?" He struck his hand on the table, and lost his hold over himself for the first time in Vendale's experience of him. "Sir!" he exclaimed, indignantly, "what sort of conduct is this? As a man of honour, speaking to a man of honour, how can you justify it?"

"I can only justify it as one of our English institutions," said Vendale, quietly. "You admire our English institutions. I can't honestly tell you, Mr. Obenreizer, that I regret what I have done. I can only assure you that I have not acted in the matter with any intentional disrespect towards yourself. This said, may I ask you to tell me plainly what objection you see to favouring my suit?"

"I see this immense objection," answered Obenreizer, "that my niece and you are not on a social equality together. My niece is the daughter of a poor peasant; and you are the son of a gentleman. You do us an honour," he added, lowering himself again gradually to his customary polite level, "which deserves, and has, our most grateful acknowledgments. But the inequality is too glaring; the sacrifice is too great. You English are a proud people, Mr. Vendale. I have observed enough of this country to see that such a marriage as you propose would be a scandal here. Not a hand would be held out to your peasant-wife; and all your best friends would desert you."

"One moment," said Vendale, interposing on his side. "I may claim, without any great arrogance, to know more of my country-people in general, and of my own friends in particular, than you do. In the estimation of everybody whose opinion is worth having, my wife herself would be the one sufficient justification of my marriage. If I did not feel certain—observe, I say certain—that I am offering her a position which she can accept without so much as the shadow of a humiliation—I would never (cost me what it might) have asked her to be my wife. Is there any other obstacle that you see? Have you any personal objection to me?"

Obenreizer spread out both his hands in courteous protest. "Personal objection!" he exclaimed. "Dear sir, the bare question is painful to me."

"We are both men of business," pursued Vendale, "and you naturally expect me to satisfy you that I have the means of supporting a wife. I can explain my pecuniary position in two words. I inherit from my parents a fortune of twenty thousand pounds. In half of that sum I have only a life-interest, to which, if I die, leaving a widow, my widow succeeds. If I die, leaving children, the money itself is divided among them, as they come of age. The other half of my fortune is at my own disposal, and is invested in the wine-business. I see my way to greatly improving that business. As it stands at present, I cannot state my return from my capital embarked at more than twelve hundred a year. Add the yearly value of my life-interest—and the total reaches a present annual income of fifteen hundred pounds. I have the fairest prospect of soon making it more. In the

mean time, do you object to me on pecuniary grounds?"

Driven back to his last entrenchment, Obenreizer rose, and took a turn backwards and forwards in the room. For the moment, he was plainly at a loss what to say or do next.

"Before I answer that last question," he said, after a little close consideration with himself, "I beg leave to revert for a moment to Miss Marguerite. You said something just now which seemed to imply that she returns the sentiment with which you are pleased to regard her?"

"I have the inestimable happiness," said Vendale, "of knowing that she loves me."

Obenreizer stood silent for a moment, with the film over his eyes, and the faintly perceptible beat becoming visible again in his cheeks.

"If you will excuse me for a few minutes," he said, with ceremonious politeness, "I should like to have the opportunity of speaking to my niece." With those words, he bowed, and quitted the room.

Left by himself, Vendale's thoughts (as a necessary result of the interview, thus far) turned instinctively to the consideration of Obenreizer's motives. He had put obstacles in the way of the courtship; he was now putting obstacles in the way of the marriage—a marriage offering advantages which even his ingenuity could not dispute. On the face of it, his conduct was incomprehensible. What did it mean?

Seeking, under the surface, for the answer to that question—and remembering that Obenreizer was a man of about his own age; also, that Marguerite was, strictly speaking, his half-niece only—Vendale asked himself, with a lover's ready jealousy, whether he had a rival to fear, as well as a guardian to conciliate. The thought just crossed his mind, and no more. The sense of Marguerite's kiss still lingering on his cheek reminded him gently that even the jealousy of a moment was now a treason to *her*.

On reflection, it seemed most likely that a personal motive of another kind might suggest the true explanation of Obenreizer's conduct. Marguerite's grace and beauty were precious ornaments in that little household. They gave it a special social attraction and a special social importance. They armed Obenreizer with a certain influence in reserve, which he could always depend upon to make his house attractive, and which he might always bring more or less to bear on the forwarding of his own private ends. Was he the sort of man to resign such advantages as were here implied, without obtaining the fullest possible compensation for the loss? A connexion by marriage with Vendale offered him solid advantages, beyond all doubt. But there were hundreds of men in London with far greater power and far wider influence than Vendale possessed. Was it possible that this man's ambition secretly looked higher than the highest prospects that could be offered to him by the alliance now proposed for his niece? As the question passed through Vendale's mind, the man himself reappeared—to answer it, or not to answer it, as the event might prove.

A marked change was visible in Obenreizer when he resumed his place. His manner was less assured, and there were plain traces about his mouth of recent agitation which had not been successfully composed. Had he said something, referring either to Vendale or to himself, which had roused Marguerite's spirit, and which had placed him, for the first time, face to face with a resolute assertion of his niece's will? It might or might not be. This only was certain—he looked like a man who had met with a repulse.

"I have spoken to my niece," he began. "I find, Mr. Vendale, that even your influence has not entirely blinded her to the social objections to your proposal."

"May I ask," returned Vendale, "if that is the only result of your interview with Miss Obenreizer?"

A momentary flash leapt out through the Obenreizer film.

"You are master of the situation," he answered, in a tone of sardonic submission. "If you insist on my admitting it, I do admit it in those words. My niece's will and mine used to be one, Mr. Vendale. You have come between us, and her will is now yours. In my country, we know when we are beaten, and we submit with our best grace. I submit, with my best grace, on certain conditions. Let us revert to the statement of your pecuniary position. I have an objection to you, my dear sir—a most amazing, a most audacious objection, from a man in my position to a man in yours."

"What is it?"

"You have honoured me by making a proposal for my niece's hand. For the present (with best thanks and respects), I beg to decline it."

"Why?"

"Because you are not rich enough."

The objection, as the speaker had foreseen, took Vendale completely by surprise. For the moment he was speechless.

"Your income is fifteen hundred a year," pursued Obenreizer. "In my miserable country I should fall on my knees before your income, and say, 'What a princely fortune!' In wealthy England, I sit as I am, and say, 'A modest independence, dear sir; nothing more. Enough, perhaps, for a wife in your own rank of life, who has no social prejudices to conquer. Not more than half enough for a wife who is a meanly born foreigner, and who has all your social prejudices against her.' Sir! if my niece is ever to marry you, she will have what you call uphill work of it in taking her place at starting. Yes, yes; this is not your view, but it remains, immovably remains, my view for all that. For my niece's sake, I claim that this uphill work shall be made as smooth as possible. Whatever material advantages she can have to help her, ought, in common justice, to be hers. Now, tell me, Mr. Vendale, on your fifteen hundred a year can your wife have a house in a fashionable quarter, a footman to open her door, a butler to wait at her table, and a carriage and horses to drive about in? I see the answer in your face—your face says, No.

Very good. Tell me one more thing, and I have done. Take the mass of your educated, accomplished, and lovely countrywomen, is it, or is it not, the fact that a lady who has a house in a fashionable quarter, a footman to open her door, a butler to wait at her table, and a carriage and horses to drive about in, is a lady who has gained four steps, in female estimation, at starting? Yes? or No?"

"Come to the point," said Vendale. "You view this question as a question of terms. What are your terms?"

"The lowest terms, dear sir, on which you can provide your wife with those four steps at starting. Double your present income—the most rigid economy cannot do it in England on less. You said just now that you expected greatly to increase the value of your business. To work—and increase it! I am a good devil after all! On the day when you satisfy me, by plain proofs, that your income has risen to three thousand a year, ask me for my niece's hand, and it is yours."

"May I inquire if you have mentioned this arrangement to Miss Obenreizer?"

"Certainly. She has a last little morsel of regard still left for me, Mr. Vendale, which is not yours yet; and she accepts my terms. In other words, she submits to be guided by her guardian's regard for her welfare, and by her guardian's superior knowledge of the world." He threw himself back in his chair, in firm reliance on his position, and in full possession of his excellent temper.

Any open assertion of his own interests, in the situation in which Vendale was now placed, seemed to be (for the present at least) hopeless. He found himself literally left with no ground to stand on. Whether Obenreizer's objections were the genuine product of Obenreizer's own view of the case, or whether he was simply delaying the marriage in the hope of ultimately breaking it off altogether—in either of these events, any present resistance on Vendale's part would be equally useless. There was no help for it but to yield, making the best terms that he could on his own side.

"I protest against the conditions you impose on me," he began.

"Naturally," said Obenreizer; "I dare say I should protest, myself, in your place."

"Say, however," pursued Vendale, "that I accept your terms. In that case, I must be permitted to make two stipulations on my part. In the first place, I shall expect to be allowed to see your niece."

"Aha! to see my niece? and to make her in as great a hurry to be married as you are yourself? Suppose I say, No? you would see her perhaps without my permission?"

"Decidedly!"

"How delightfully frank! How exquisitely English! You shall see her, Mr. Vendale, on certain days, which we will appoint together. What next?"

"Your objection to my income," proceeded Vendale, "has taken me completely by surprise. I wish to be assured against any repetition of

that surprise. Your present views of my qualification for marriage require me to have an income of three thousand a year. Can I be certain, in the future, as your experience of England enlarges, that your estimate will rise no higher?"

"In plain English," said Obenreizer, "you doubt my word?"

"Do you purpose to take *my* word for it when I inform you that I have doubled my income?" asked Vendale. "If my memory does not deceive me, you stipulated, a minute since, for plain proofs?"

"Well played, Mr. Vendale! You combine the foreign quickness with the English solidity. Accept my best congratulations. Accept, also, my written guarantee."

He rose; seated himself at a writing-desk at a side-table, wrote a few lines, and presented them to Vendale with a low bow. The engagement was perfectly explicit, and was signed and dated with scrupulous care.

"Are you satisfied with your guarantee?"

"I am satisfied."

"Charmed to hear it, I am sure. We have had our little skirmish—we have really been wonderfully clever on both sides. For the present our affairs are settled. I bear no malice. You bear no malice. Come, Mr. Vendale, a good English shake hands."

Vendale gave his hand, a little bewildered by Obenreizer's sudden transitions from one humour to another.

"When may I expect to see Miss Obenreizer again?" he asked, as he rose to go.

"Honour me with a visit to-morrow," said Obenreizer, "and we will settle it then. Do have a grog before you go! No? Well! well! we will reserve the grog till you have your three thousand a year, and are ready to be married. Aha! When will that be?"

"I made an estimate, some months since, of the capacities of my business," said Vendale. "If that estimate is correct, I shall double my present income—"

"And be married!" added Obenreizer.

"And be married," repeated Vendale, "within a year from this time. Good night."

VENDALE MAKES MISCHIEF.

When Vendale entered his office the next morning, the dull commercial routine at Cripple Corner met him with a new face. Marguerite had an interest in it now! The whole machinery which Wilding's death had set in motion, to realise the value of the business—the balancing of ledgers, the estimating of debts, the taking of stock, and the rest of it—was now transformed into machinery which indicated the chances for and against a speedy marriage. After looking over results, as presented by his accountant, and checking additions and subtractions, as rendered by the clerks, Vendale turned his attention to the stock-taking department next, and sent a message to the cellars, desiring to see the report.

The Cellarman's appearance, the moment he put his head in at the door of his master's private room, suggested that something very extraordinary must have happened that morning. There was an approach to alacrity in Joey Ladle's movements! There was something which actually simulated cheerfulness in Joey Ladle's face!

"What's the matter?" asked Vendale. "Anything wrong?"

"I should wish to mention one thing," answered Joey. "Young Mr. Vendale, I have never set myself up for a prophet."

"Who ever said you did?"

"No prophet, as far as I've heard tell of that profession," proceeded Joey, "ever lived principally underground. No prophet, whatever else he might take in at the pores, ever took in wine from morning to night, for a number of years together. When I said to young Master Wilding, respecting his changing the name of the firm, that one of these days he might find he'd changed the luck of the firm—did I put myself forward as a prophet? No, I didn't. Has what I said to him come true? Yes, it has. In the time of Pebbleson Nephew, Young Mr. Vendale, no such thing was ever known as a mistake made in a consignment delivered at these doors. There's a mistake been made now. Please to remark that it happened before Miss Margaret came here. For which reason it don't go against what I've said respecting Miss Margaret singing round the luck. Read that, sir," concluded Joey, pointing attention to a special passage in the report, with a forefinger which appeared to be in process of taking in through the pores nothing more remarkable than dirt. "It's foreign to my nature to crow over the house I serve, but I feel it a kind of a solemn duty to ask you to read that."

Vendale read as follows:—"Note, respecting the Swiss champagne. An irregularity has been discovered in the last consignment received from the firm of Defresnier and Co." Vendale stopped, and referred to a memorandum-book by his side. "That was in Mr. Wilding's time," he said. "The vintage was a particularly good one, and he took the whole of it. The Swiss champagne has done very well, hasn't it?"

"I don't say it's done badly," answered the Cellarman. "It may have got sick in our customers' bins, or it may have bust in our customers' hands. But I don't say it's done badly with us."

Vendale resumed the reading of the note: "We find the number of the cases to be quite correct by the books. But six of them, which present a slight difference from the rest in the brand, have been opened, and have been found to contain a red wine instead of champagne. The similarity in the brands, we suppose, caused a mistake to be made in sending the consignment from Neuchâtel. The error has not been found to extend beyond six cases."

"Is that all!" exclaimed Vendale, tossing the note away from him.

Joey Ladle's eye followed the flying morsel of paper drearily.

"I'm glad to see you take it easy, sir," he said. "Whatever happens, it will be always a comfort to you to remember that you took it easy at first. Sometimes one mistake leads to another. A man drops a bit of orange-peel on the pavement by mistake, and another man treads on it by mistake, and there's a job at the hospital, and a party crippled for life. I'm glad you take it easy, sir. In Pebbleson Nephew's time we shouldn't have taken it easy till we had seen the end of it. Without desiring to crow over the house, Young Mr. Vendale, I wish you well through it. No offence, sir," said the Cellarman, opening the door to go out, and looking in again ominously before he shut it. "I'm muddled and mollen-colly, I grant you. But I'm an old servant of Pebbleson Nephew, and I wish you well through them six cases of red wine."

Left by himself, Vendale laughed, and took up his pen. "I may as well send a line to Defresnier and Company," he thought, "before I forget it." He wrote at once in these terms:

"Dear Sirs. We are taking stock, and a trifling mistake has been discovered in the last consignment of champagne sent by your house to ours. Six of the cases contain red wine—which we hereby return to you. The matter can easily be set right, either by your sending us six cases of the champagne, if they can be produced, or, if not, by your crediting us with the value of six cases on the amount last paid (five hundred pounds) by our firm to yours. Your faithful servants,

"WILDING AND CO."

This letter despatched to the post, the subject dropped at once out of Vendale's mind. He had other and far more interesting matters to think of. Later in the day he paid the visit to Obenreizer which had been agreed on between them. Certain evenings in the week were set apart which he was privileged to spend with Marguerite—always, however, in the presence of a third person. On this stipulation Obenreizer politely but positively insisted. The one concession he made was to give Vendale his choice of who the third person should be. Confiding in past experience, his choice fell unhesitatingly upon the excellent woman who mended Obenreizer's stockings. On hearing of the responsibility entrusted to her, Madame Dor's intellectual nature burst suddenly into a new stage of development. She waited till Obenreizer's eye was off her—and then she looked at Vendale, and dimly winked.

The time passed—the happy evenings with Marguerite came and went. It was the tenth morning since Vendale had written to the Swiss firm, when the answer appeared on his desk, with the other letters of the day:

"Dear Sirs, We beg to offer our excuses for the little mistake which has happened. At the same time, we regret to add that the statement of our error, with which you have favoured us, has led to a very unexpected discovery. The affair is a most serious one for you and for us. The particulars are as follows:

"Having no more champagne of the vintage last

sent to you, we made arrangements to credit your firm with the value of the six cases, as suggested by yourself. On taking this step, certain forms observed in our mode of doing business necessitated a reference to our bankers' book, as well as to our ledger. The result is a moral certainty that no such remittance as you mention can have reached our house, and a literal certainty that no such remittance has been paid to our account at the bank.

"It is needless, at this stage of the proceedings, to trouble you with details. The money has unquestionably been stolen in the course of its transit from you to us. Certain peculiarities which we observe, relating to the manner in which the fraud has been perpetrated, lead us to conclude that the thief may have calculated on being able to pay the missing sum to our bankers, before an inevitable discovery followed the annual striking of our balance. This would not have happened, in the usual course, for another three months. During that period, but for your letter, we might have remained perfectly unconscious of the robbery that has been committed.

"We mention this last circumstance, as it may help to show you that we have to do, in this case, with no ordinary thief. Thus far we have not even a suspicion of who that thief is. But we believe you will assist us in making some advance towards discovery, by examining the receipt (forged, of course) which has no doubt purported to come to you from our house. Be pleased to look and see whether it is a receipt entirely in manuscript, or whether it is a numbered and printed form which merely requires the filling in of the amount. The settlement of this apparently trivial question is, we assure you, a matter of vital importance. Anxiously awaiting your reply, we remain, with high esteem and consideration,

"DEFRESNIER & C^{ie}."

Vendale laid the letter on his desk, and waited a moment to steady his mind under the shock that had fallen on it. At the time of all others when it was most important to him to increase the value of his business, that business was threatened with a loss of five hundred pounds. He thought of Marguerite, as he took the key from his pocket and opened the iron chamber in the wall in which the books and papers of the firm were kept.

He was still in the chamber, searching for the forged receipt, when he was startled by a voice speaking close behind him.

"A thousand pardons," said the voice; "I am afraid I disturb you."

He turned, and found himself face to face with Marguerite's guardian.

"I have called," pursued Obenreizer, "to know if I can be of any use. Business of my own takes me away for some days to Manchester and Liverpool. Can I combine any business of yours with it? I am entirely at your disposal, in the character of commercial traveller for the firm of Wilding and Co."

"Excuse me for one moment," said Vendale; "I will speak to you directly." He turned round again, and continued his search among the papers. "You come at a time when friendly offers are more than usually precious to me," he resumed. "I have had very bad news this morning from Neuchâtel."

"Bad news!" exclaimed Obenreizer. "From Defresnier and Company?"

"Yes. A remittance we sent to them has

been stolen. I am threatened with a loss of five hundred pounds. What's that?"

Turning sharply, and looking into the room for the second time, Vendale discovered his envelope-case overthrown on the floor, and Obenreizer on his knees picking up the contents.

"All my awkwardness!" said Obenreizer. "This dreadful news of yours startled me; I stepped back——" He became too deeply interested in collecting the scattered envelopes to finish the sentence.

"Don't trouble yourself," said Vendale. "The clerk will pick the things up."

"This dreadful news!" repeated Obenreizer, persisting in collecting the envelopes. "This dreadful news!"

"If you will read the letter," said Vendale, "you will find I have exaggerated nothing. There it is, open on my desk."

He resumed his search, and in a moment more discovered the forged receipt. It was on the numbered and printed form, described by the Swiss firm. Vendale made a memorandum of the number and the date. Having replaced the receipt and locked up the iron chamber, he had leisure to notice Obenreizer, reading the letter in the recess of a window at the far end of the room.

"Come to the fire," said Vendale. "You look perished with the cold out there. I will ring for some more coals."

Obenreizer rose, and came slowly back to the desk. "Marguerite will be as sorry to hear of this as I am," he said, kindly. "What do you mean to do?"

"I am in the hands of Defresnier and Company," answered Vendale. "In my total ignorance of the circumstances, I can only do what they recommend. The receipt which I have just found, turns out to be the numbered and printed form. They seem to attach some special importance to its discovery. You have had experience, when you were in the Swiss house, of their way of doing business. Can you guess what object they have in view?"

Obenreizer offered a suggestion.

"Suppose I examine the receipt?" he said.

"Are you ill?" asked Vendale, startled by the change in his face, which now showed itself plainly for the first time. "Pray go to the fire. You seem to be shivering—I hope you are not going to be ill?"

"Not I!" said Obenreizer. "Perhaps I have caught cold. Your English climate might have spared an admirer of your English institutions. Let me look at the receipt."

Vendale opened the iron chamber. Obenreizer took a chair, and drew it close to the fire. He held both hands over the flames. "Let me look at the receipt," he repeated, eagerly, as Vendale reappeared with the paper in his hand. At the same moment a porter entered the room with a fresh supply of coals. Vendale told him to make a good fire. The man obeyed the order with a disastrous alacrity. As he stepped forward and raised the scuttle, his foot caught in a fold of the rug, and he discharged his entire cargo of coals into the grate.

The result was an instant smothering of the flame, and the production of a stream of yellow smoke, without a visible morsel of fire to account for it.

"Imbecile!" whispered Obenreizer to himself, with a look at the man which the man remembered for many a long day afterwards.

"Will you come into the clerks' room?" asked Vendale. "They have a stove there."

"No, no. No matter."

Vendale handed him the receipt. Obenreizer's interest in examining it appeared to have been quenched as suddenly and as effectually as the fire itself. He just glanced over the document, and said, "No; I don't understand it! I am sorry to be of no use."

"I will write to Neuchâtel by to-night's post," said Vendale, putting away the receipt for the second time. "We must wait, and see what comes of it."

"By to-night's post," repeated Obenreizer. "Let me see. You will get the answer in eight or nine days' time. I shall be back before that. If I can be of any service, as commercial traveller, perhaps you will let me know between this and then. You will send me written instructions? My best thanks. I shall be most anxious for your answer from Neuchâtel. Who knows? It may be a mistake, my dear friend, after all. Courage! courage! courage!" He had entered the room with no appearance of being pressed for time. He now snatched up his hat, and took his leave with the air of a man who had not another moment to lose.

Left by himself, Vendale took a turn thoughtfully in the room.

His previous impression of Obenreizer was shaken by what he had heard and seen at the interview which had just taken place. He was disposed, for the first time, to doubt whether, in this case, he had not been a little hasty and hard in his judgment on another man. Obenreizer's surprise and regret, on hearing the news from Neuchâtel, bore the plainest marks of being honestly felt—not politely assumed for the occasion. With troubles of his own to encounter, suffering, to all appearance, from the first insidious attack of a serious illness, he had looked and spoken like a man who really deplored the disaster that had fallen on his friend. Hitherto, Vendale had tried vainly to alter his first opinion of Marguerite's guardian, for Marguerite's sake. All the generous instincts in his nature now combined together and shook the evidence which had seemed unanswerable up to this time. "Who knows?" he thought, "I may have read that man's face wrongly, after all."

The time passed—the happy evenings with Marguerite came and went. It was again the tenth morning since Vendale had written to the Swiss firm; and again the answer appeared on his desk with the other letters of the day:

"Dear Sir. My senior partner, M. Defresnier, has been called away, by urgent business, to Milan. In his absence (and with his full concurrence and autho-

ry), I now write to you again on the subject of the missing five hundred pounds.

"Your discovery that the forged receipt is executed upon one of our numbered and printed forms has caused inexpressible surprise and distress to my partner and to myself. At the time when your remittance was stolen, but three keys were in existence opening the strong box in which our receipt-forms are invariably kept. My partner had one key; I had the other. The third was in the possession of a gentleman who, at that period, occupied a position of trust in our house. We should as soon have thought of suspecting one of ourselves as of suspecting this person. Suspicion now points at him, nevertheless. I cannot prevail on myself to inform you who the person is, so long as there is the shadow of a chance that he may come innocently out of the inquiry which must now be instituted. Forgive my silence; the motive of it is good.

"The form our investigation must now take is simple enough. The handwriting on your receipt must be compared, by competent persons whom we have at our disposal, with certain specimens of handwriting in our possession. I cannot send you the specimens, for business reasons, which, when you hear them, you are sure to approve. I must beg you to send me the receipt to Neuchâtel—and, in making this request, I must accompany it by a word of necessary warning.

"If the person, at whom suspicion now points, really proves to be the person who has committed this forgery and theft, I have reason to fear that circumstances may have already put him on his guard. The only evidence against him is the evidence in your hands, and he will move heaven and earth to obtain and destroy it. I strongly urge you not to trust the receipt to the post. Send it to me, without loss of time, by a private hand, and choose nobody for your messenger but a person long established in your own employment, accustomed to travelling, capable of speaking French; a man of courage, a man of honesty, and, above all things, a man who can be trusted to let no stranger scrape acquaintance with him on the route. Tell no one—absolutely no one—but your messenger of the turn this matter has now taken. The safe transit of the receipt may depend on your interpreting *literally* the advice which I give you at the end of this letter.

"I have only to add that every possible saving of time is now of the last importance. More than one of our receipt-forms is missing—and it is impossible to say what new frauds may not be committed, if we fail to lay our hands on the thief.

"Your faithful servant.

"ROLLAND,

"(Signing for Defresnier and Co's)."

Who was the suspected man? In Vendale's position, it seemed useless to inquire.

Who was to be sent to Neuchâtel with the receipt? Men of courage and men of honesty were to be had at Cripple Corner for the asking. But where was the man who was accustomed to foreign travelling, who could speak the French language, and who could be really relied on to let no stranger scrape acquaintance with him on his route? There was but one man at hand who combined all those requisites in his own person, and that man was Vendale himself.

It was a sacrifice to leave his business; it was a greater sacrifice to leave Marguerite. But a matter of five hundred pounds was in-

volved in the pending inquiry; and a literal interpretation of M. Rolland's advice was insisted on in terms which there was no trifling with. The more Vendale thought of it, the more plainly the necessity faced him, and said, "Go!"

As he locked up the letter with the receipt, the association of ideas reminded him of Obenreizer. A guess at the identity of the suspected man looked more possible now. Obenreizer might know.

The thought had barely passed through his mind, when the door opened, and Obenreizer entered the room.

"They told me at Soho-square you were expected back last night," said Vendale, greeting him. "Have you done well in the country? Are you better?"

A thousand thanks. Obenreizer had done admirably well; Obenreizer was infinitely better. And now, what news? Any letter from Neuchâtel?

"A very strange letter," answered Vendale. "The matter has taken a new turn, and the letter insists—without excepting anybody—on my keeping our next proceedings a profound secret."

"Without excepting anybody?" repeated Obenreizer. As he said the words, he walked away again, thoughtfully, to the window at the other end of the room, looked out for a moment, and suddenly came back to Vendale. "Surely they must have forgotten?" he resumed, "or they would have excepted me?"

"It is Monsieur Rolland who writes," said Vendale. "And, as you say, he must certainly have forgotten. That view of the matter quite escaped me. I was just wishing I had you to consult, when you came into the room. And here I am tied by a formal prohibition, which cannot possibly have been intended to include you. How very annoying!"

Obenreizer's filmy eyes fixed on Vendale attentively.

"Perhaps it is more than annoying!" he said. "I came this morning not only to hear the news, but to offer myself as messenger, negotiator—what you will. Would you believe it? I have letters which oblige me to go to Switzerland immediately. Messages, documents, anything—I could have taken them all to Defresnier and Rolland for you."

"You are the very man I wanted," returned Vendale. "I had decided, most unwillingly, on going to Neuchâtel myself, not five minutes since, because I could find no one here capable of taking my place. Let me look at the letter again."

He opened the strong room to get at the letter. Obenreizer, after first glancing round him to make sure that they were alone, followed a step or two and waited, measuring Vendale with his eye. Vendale was the tallest man, and unmistakably the strongest man also of the two. Obenreizer turned away, and warmed himself at the fire.

Meanwhile, Vendale read the last paragraph in the letter for the third time. There was the plain warning—there was the closing sen-

tence, which insisted on a literal interpretation of it. The hand, which was leading Vendale in the dark, led him on that condition only. A large sum was at stake: a terrible suspicion remained to be verified. If he acted on his own responsibility, and if anything happened to defeat the object in view, who would be blamed? As a man of business, Vendale had but one course to follow. He locked the letter up again.

"It is most annoying," he said to Obenreizer—"it is a piece of forgetfulness on Monsieur Rolland's part which puts me to serious inconvenience, and places me in an absurdly false position towards you. What am I to do? I am acting in a very serious matter, and acting entirely in the dark. I have no choice but to be guided, not by the spirit, but by the letter of my instructions. You understand me, I am sure? You know, if I had not been fettered in this way, how gladly I should have accepted your services?"

"Say no more!" returned Obenreizer. "In your place I should have done the same. My good friend, I take no offence. I thank you for your compliment. We shall be travelling companions, at any rate," added Obenreizer. "You go, as I go, at once?"

"At once. I must speak to Marguerite first, of course!"

"Surely! surely! Speak to her this evening. Come, and pick me up on the way to the station. We go together by the mail train to-night?"

"By the mail train to-night."

It was later than Vendale had anticipated when he drove up to the house in Soho-square. Business difficulties, occasioned by his sudden departure, had presented themselves by dozens. A cruelly large share of the time which he had hoped to devote to Marguerite had been claimed by duties at his office which it was impossible to neglect.

To his surprise and delight, she was alone in the drawing-room when he entered it.

"We have only a few minutes, George," she said. "But Madame Dor has been good to me—and we can have those few minutes alone." She threw her arms round his neck, and whispered eagerly, "Have you done anything to offend Mr. Obenreizer?"

"I!" exclaimed Vendale, in amazement.

"Hush!" she said, "I want to whisper it. You know the little photograph I have got of you. This afternoon it happened to be on the chimney-piece. He took it up and looked at it—and I saw his face in the glass. I know you have offended him! He is merciless; he is revengeful; he is as secret as the grave. Don't go with him, George—don't go with him!"

"My own love," returned Vendale, "you are letting your fancy frighten you! Obenreizer and I were never better friends than we are at this moment."

Before a word more could be said, the sudden movement of some ponderous body shook the floor of the next room. The shock was fol-

lowed by the appearance of Madame Dor. "Obenreizer!" exclaimed this excellent person in a whisper, and plumped down instantly in her regular place by the stove.

Obenreizer came in with a courier's bag strapped over his shoulder.

"Are you ready?" he asked, addressing Vendale. "Can I take anything for you? You have no travelling-bag. I have got one. Here is the compartment for papers, open at your service."

"Thank you," said Vendale. "I have only one paper of importance with me; and that paper I am bound to take charge of myself. Here it is," he added, touching the breast-pocket of his coat, "and here it must remain till we get to Neuchâtel."

As he said those words, Marguerite's hand caught his, and pressed it significantly. She was looking towards Obenreizer. Before Vendale could look, in his turn, Obenreizer had wheeled round, and was taking leave of Madame Dor.

"Adieu, my charming niece!" he said, turning to Marguerite next. "En route, my friend, for Neuchâtel!" He tapped Vendale lightly over the breast-pocket of his coat, and led the way to the door.

Vendale's last look was for Marguerite. Marguerite's last words to him were, "Don't go!"

ACT III.

IN THE VALLEY.

It was about the middle of the month of February when Vendale and Obenreizer set forth on their expedition. The winter being a hard one, the time was bad for travellers. So bad was it that these two travellers, coming to Strasbourg, found its great inns almost empty. And even the few people they did encounter in that city, who had started from England or from Paris on business journeys towards the interior of Switzerland, were turning back.

Many of the railroads in Switzerland that tourists pass easily enough now, were almost or quite impracticable then. Some were not begun; more were not completed. On such as were open, there were still large gaps of old road where communication in the winter season was often stopped; on others, there were weak points where the new work was not safe, either under conditions of severe frost, or of rapid thaw. The running of trains on this last class was not to be counted on in the worst time of the year, was contingent upon weather, or was wholly abandoned through the months considered the most dangerous.

At Strasbourg there were more travellers' stories afloat, respecting the difficulties of the way further on, than there were travellers to relate them. Many of these tales were as wild as usual; but the more modestly marvellous did derive some colour from the circumstance that people were indisputably turning back. However, as the road to Basle was open, Vendale's resolution to push on was in no wise

disturbed. Obenreizer's resolution was necessarily Vendale's, seeing that he stood at bay thus desperately:—He must be ruined, or must destroy the evidence that Vendale carried about him, even if he destroyed Vendale with it.

The state of mind of each of these two fellow-travellers towards the other was this. Obenreizer, encircled by impending ruin through Vendale's quickness of action, and seeing the circle narrowed every hour by Vendale's energy, hated him with the animosity of a fierce cunning lower animal. He had always had instinctive movements in his breast against him; perhaps, because of that old sore of gentleman and peasant; perhaps, because of the openness of his nature; perhaps, because of his better looks; perhaps, because of his success with Marguerite; perhaps, on all those grounds, the two last not the least. And now he saw in him, besides, the hunter who was tracking him down. Vendale, on the other hand, always contending generously against his first vague mistrust, now felt bound to contend against it more than ever: reminding himself, "He is Marguerite's guardian. We are on perfectly friendly terms; he is my companion of his own proposal, and can have no interested motive in sharing this undesirable journey." To which pleas in behalf of Obenreizer, chance added one consideration more, when they came to Basle, after a journey of more than twice the average duration.

They had had a late dinner, and were alone in an inn room there, overhanging the Rhine: at that place rapid and deep, swollen and loud. Vendale lounged upon a couch, and Obenreizer walked to and fro: now, stopping at the window, looking at the crooked reflections of the town lights in the dark water (and peradventure thinking, "If I could fling him into it!"); now, resuming his walk with his eyes upon the floor.

"Where shall I rob him, if I can? Where shall I murder him, if I must?" So, as he paced the room, ran the river, ran the river, ran the river.

The burden seemed to him at last, to be growing so plain that he stopped; thinking it as well to suggest another burden to his companion.

"The Rhine sounds to-night," he said with a smile, "like the old waterfall at home. That waterfall which my mother showed to travellers (I told you of it once). The sound of it changed with the weather, as does the sound of all falling waters and flowing waters. When I was pupil of the watchmaker, I remembered it as sometimes saying to me for whole days, 'Who are you, my little wretch? Who are you, my little wretch?' I remembered it as saying, other times, when its sound was hollow, and storm was coming up the Pass: 'Boom, boom, boom. Beat him, beat him, beat him.' Like my mother enraged—if she was my mother."

"If she was?" said Vendale, gradually changing his attitude to a sitting one. "If she was? Why do you say 'if'?"

"What do I know?" replied the other negligently, throwing up his hands and letting them fall as they would. "What would you have? I am so obscurely born, that how can I say? I

was very young, and all the rest of the family were men and women, and my so-called parents were old. Anything is possible of a case like that?"

"Did you ever doubt——?"

"I told you once, I doubt the marriage of those two," he replied, throwing up his hands again, as if he were throwing the unprofitable subject away. "But here I am in Creation. I come of no fine family. What does it matter?"

"At least you are Swiss," said Vendale, after following him with his eyes to and fro.

"How do I know?" he retorted abruptly, and stopping to look back over his shoulder. "I say to you, at least you are English. How do you know?"

"By what I have been told from infancy."

"Ah! I know of myself that way."

"And," added Vendale, pursuing the thought that he could not drive back, "by my earliest recollections."

"I also. I know of myself that way—if that way satisfies."

"Does it not satisfy you?"

"It must. There is nothing like 'it must' in this little world. It must. Two short words those, but stronger than long proof or reasoning."

"You and poor Wilding were born in the same year. You were nearly of an age," said Vendale, again thoughtfully looking after him as he resumed his pacing up and down.

"Yes. Very nearly."

Could Obenreizer be the missing man? In the unknown associations of things, was there a subtler meaning than he himself thought, in that theory so often on his lips about the smallness of the world? Had the Swiss letter presenting him, followed so close on Mrs. Goldstraw's revelation concerning the infant who had been taken away to Switzerland, because he was that infant grown a man? In a world where so many depths lie unsounded, it might be. The chances, or the laws—call them either—that had wrought out the revival of Vendale's own acquaintance with Obenreizer, and had ripened it into intimacy, and had brought them here together this present winter night, were hardly less curious; while read by such a light, they were seen to cohere towards the furtherance of a continuous and an intelligible purpose.

Vendale's awakened thoughts ran high while his eyes musingly followed Obenreizer pacing up and down the room, the river ever running to the tune: "Where shall I rob him, if I can? Where shall I murder him, if I must?" The secret of his dead friend was in no hazard from Vendale's lips; but just as his friend had died of its weight, so did he in his lighter succession feel the burden of the trust, and the obligation to follow any clue, however obscure. He rapidly asked himself, would he like this man to be the real Wilding? No. Argue down his mistrust as he might, he was unwilling to put such a substitute in the place of his late guileless, outspoken, childlike partner. He rapidly asked himself, would he like this man to be rich? No. He had more power than enough

over Marguerite as it was, and wealth might invest him with more. Would he like this man to be Marguerite's Guardian, and yet proved to stand in no degree of relationship towards her, however disconnected and distant? No. But these were not considerations to come between him and fidelity to the dead. Let him see to it that they passed him with no other notice than the knowledge that they *had* passed him, and left him bent on the discharge of a solemn duty. And he did see to it, so soon that he followed his companion with ungrudging eyes, while he still paced the room; that companion, whom he supposed to be moodily reflecting on his own birth, and not on another man's—least of all what man's—violent Death.

The road in advance from Basle to Neuchâtel was better than had been represented. The latest weather had done it good. Drivers, both of horses and mules, had come in that evening after dark, and had reported nothing more difficult to be overcome than trials of patience, harness, wheels, axles, and whipcord. A bargain was soon struck for a carriage and horses, to take them on in the morning, and to start before daylight.

"Do you lock your door at night when travelling?" asked Obenreizer, standing warming his hands by the wood fire in Vendale's chamber, before going to his own.

"Not I. I sleep too soundly."

"You are so sound a sleeper?" he retorted, with an admiring look. "What a blessing!"

"Anything but a blessing to the rest of the house," rejoined Vendale, "if I had to be knocked up in the morning from the outside of my bedroom door."

"I, too," said Obenreizer, "leave open my room. But let me advise you, as a Swiss who knows: always, when you travel in my country, put your papers—and, of course, your money—under your pillow. Always the same place."

"You are not complimentary to your countrymen," laughed Vendale.

"My countrymen," said Obenreizer, with that light touch of his friend's elbows by way of Good Night and benediction, "I suppose, are like the majority of men. And the majority of men will take what they can get. Adieu! At four in the morning."

"Adieu! At four."

Left to himself, Vendale raked the logs together, sprinkled over them the white wood-ashes lying on the hearth, and sat down to compose his thoughts. But they still ran high on their latest theme, and the running of the river tended to agitate rather than to quiet them. As he sat thinking, what little disposition he had had to sleep, departed. He felt it hopeless to lie down yet, and sat dressed by the fire. Marguerite, Wilding, Obenreizer, the business he was then upon, and a thousand hopes and doubts that had nothing to do with it, occupied his mind at once. Everything seemed to have power over him, but slumber. The departed disposition to sleep kept far away.

He had sat for a long time thinking, on the hearth, when his candle burned down, and its light went out. It was of little moment; there was light enough in the fire. He changed his attitude, and, leaning his arm on the chair-back, and his chin upon that hand, sat thinking still.

But he sat between the fire and the bed, and, as the fire flickered in the play of air from the fast-flowing river, his enlarged shadow fluttered on the white wall by the bedside. His attitude gave it an air, half of mourning, and half of bending over the bed imploring. His eyes were observant of it, when he became troubled by the disagreeable fancy that it was like Wilding's shadow, and not his own.

A slight change of place would cause it to disappear. He made the change, and the apparition of his disturbed fancy vanished. He now sat in the shade of a little nook beside the fire, and the door of the room was before him.

It had a long cumbrous iron latch. He saw the latch slowly and softly rise. The door opened a very little, and came to again: as though only the air had moved it. But he saw that the latch was out of the hasp.

The door opened again very slowly, until it opened wide enough to admit some one: It afterwards remained still for a while, as though cautiously held open on the other side. The figure of a man then entered, with its face turned towards the bed, and stood quiet just within the door. Until it said, in a low half-whisper, at the same time taking one step forward: "Vendale!"

"What now?" he answered, springing from his seat; "who is it?"

It was Obenreizer, and he uttered a cry of surprise as Vendale came upon him from that unexpected direction. "Not in bed?" he said, catching him by both shoulders with an instinctive tendency to a struggle, "Then something is wrong!"

"What do you mean?" said Vendale, releasing himself.

"First tell me; you are not ill?"

"Ill? No."

"I have had a bad dream about you. How is it that I see you up and dressed?"

"My good fellow, I may as well ask you how is it that I see *you* up and undressed."

"I have told you why. I have had a bad dream about you. I tried to rest after it, but it was impossible. I could not make up my mind to stay where I was, without knowing you were safe; and yet I could not make up my mind to come in here. I have been minutes hesitating at the door. It is so easy to laugh at a dream that you have not dreamed. Where is your candle?"

"Burnt out."

"I have a whole one in my room. Shall I fetch it?"

"Do so."

His room was very near, and he was absent for but a few seconds. Coming back with the candle in his hand, he kneeled down on the hearth and lighted it. As he blew with his breath a charred billet into flame for the pur-

pose, Vendale, looking down at him, saw that his lips were white and not easy of control.

"Yes!" said Obenreizer, setting the lighted candle on the table, "it was a bad dream. Only look at me!"

His feet were bare; his red-flannel shirt was thrown back at the throat, and its sleeves were rolled above the elbows; his only other garment, a pair of under pantaloons or drawers, reaching to the ankles, fitted him close and tight. A certain lithe and savage appearance was on his figure, and his eyes were very bright.

"If there had been a wrestle with a robber, as I dreamed," said Obenreizer, "you see, I was stripped for it."

"And armed, too," said Vendale, glancing at his girdle.

"A traveller's dagger, that I always carry on the road," he answered carelessly, half drawing it from its sheath with his left hand, and putting it back again. "Do you carry no such thing?"

"Nothing of the kind."

"No pistols?" said Obenreizer, glancing at the table, and from it to the untouched pillow.

"Nothing of the sort."

"You Englishmen are so confident! You wish to sleep!"

"I have wished to sleep this long time, but I can't do it."

"I neither, after the bad dream. My fire has gone the way of your candle. May I come and sit by yours? Two o'clock! It will so soon be four, that it is not worth the trouble to go to bed again."

"I shall not take the trouble to go to bed at all, now," said Vendale; "sit here and keep me company, and welcome."

Going back to his room to arrange his dress, Obenreizer soon returned in a loose cloak and slippers, and they sat down on opposite sides of the hearth. In the interval, Vendale had replenished the fire from the wood-basket in his room, and Obenreizer had put upon the table a flask and cup from his.

"Common cabaret brandy, I am afraid," he said, pouring out; "bought upon the road, and not like yours from Cripple Corner. But yours is exhausted; so much the worse. A cold night, a cold time of night, a cold country, and a cold house. This may be better than nothing; try it."

Vendale took the cup, and did so.

"How do you find it?"

"It has a coarse after-flavour," said Vendale, giving back the cup with a slight shudder, "and I don't like it."

"You are right," said Obenreizer, tasting, and smacking his lips; "it has a coarse after-flavour, and I don't like it. Booh! it burns, though!" He had flung what remained in the cup, upon the fire.

Each of them leaned an elbow on the table, reclined his head upon his hand, and sat looking at the flaring logs. Obenreizer remained watchful and still; but Vendale, after certain nervous twitches and starts, in one of which he rose to his feet and looked wildly about him, fell into the strangest confusion of dreams. He carried his papers in a leather case or pocket-book, in

an inner breast-pocket of his buttoned travelling coat; and whatever he dreamed of, in the lethargy that got possession of him, something importunate in these papers called him out of that dream, though he could not wake from it. He was belated on the steppes of Russia (some shadowy person gave that name to the place) with Marguerite; and yet the sensation of a hand at his breast, softly feeling the outline of the pocket-book as he lay asleep before the fire, was present to him. He was shipwrecked in an open boat at sea, and having lost his clothes, had no other covering than an old sail; and yet a creeping hand, tracing outside all the other pockets of the dress he actually wore, for papers, and finding none answer its touch, warned him to rouse himself. He was in the ancient vault at Cripple Corner, to which was transferred the very bed substantial and present in that very room at Basle; and Wilding (not dead, as he had supposed, and yet he did not wonder much) shook him, and whispered, "Look at that man! Don't you see he has risen, and is turning the pillow? Why should he turn the pillow, if not to seek those papers that are in your breast? Awake!" And yet he slept, and wandered off into other dreams.

Watchful and still, with his elbow on the table and his head upon that hand, his companion at length said: "Vendale! We are called. Past Four!" Then, opening his eyes, he saw, turned sideways on him, the filmy face of Obenreizer.

"You have been in a heavy sleep," he said. "The fatigue of constant travelling and the cold!"

"I am broad awake now," cried Vendale, springing up, but with an unsteady footing. "Haven't you slept at all?"

"I may have dozed, but I seem to have been patiently looking at the fire. Whether or no, we must wash, and breakfast, and turn out. Past four, Vendale; past four!"

It was said in a tone to rouse him, for already he was half asleep again. In his preparation for the day, too, and at his breakfast, he was often virtually asleep while in mechanical action. It was not until the cold dark day was closing in, that he had any distincter impressions of the ride than jingling bells, bitter weather, slipping horses, frowning hill-sides, bleak woods, and a stoppage at some wayside house of entertainment, where they had passed through a cowhouse to reach the travellers' room above. He had been conscious of little more, except of Obenreizer sitting thoughtful at his side all day, and eyeing him much.

But when he shook off his stupor, Obenreizer was not at his side. The carriage was stopping to bait at another wayside house; and a line of long narrow carts, laden with casks of wine, and drawn by horses with a quantity of blue collar and head-gear, were baiting too. These came from the direction in which the travellers were going, and Obenreizer (not thoughtful now, but cheerful and alert) was talking with the foremost driver. As Vendale stretched his limbs, circulated his blood, and cleared off the

lees of his lethargy, with a sharp run to and fro in the bracing air, the line of carts moved on: the drivers all saluting Obenreizer as they passed him.

"Who are those?" asked Vendale.

"They are our carriers—Defresnier and Company's," replied Obenreizer. "Those are our casks of wine." He was singing to himself, and lighting a cigar.

"I have been dreadfully dull company to-day," said Vendale. "I don't know what has been the matter with me."

"You had no sleep last night; and a kind of brain-congestion frequently comes, at first, of such cold," said Obenreizer. "I have seen it often. After all, we shall have our journey for nothing, it seems."

"How for nothing?"

"The House is at Milan. You know, we are a Wine House at Neuchâtel, and a Silk House at Milan? Well, Silk happening to press of a sudden, more than Wine, Defresnier was summoned to Milan. Rolland, the other partner, has been taken ill since his departure, and the doctors will allow him to see no one. A letter awaits you at Neuchâtel to tell you so. I have it from our chief carrier whom you saw me talking with. He was surprised to see me, and said he had that word for you if he met you. What do you do? Go back?"

"Go on," said Vendale.

"On?"

"On?" Yes. Across the Alps, and down to Milan."

Obenreizer stopped in his smoking to look at Vendale, and then smoked heavily, looked up the road, looked down the road, looked down at the stones in the road at his feet.

"I have a very serious matter in charge," said Vendale; "more of these missing forms may be turned to as bad account, or worse; I am urged to lose no time in helping the House to take the thief; and nothing shall turn me back."

"No?" cried Obenreizer, taking out his cigar to smile, and giving his hand to his fellow-traveller. "Then nothing shall turn me back. Ho, driver! Despatch. Quick there! Let us push on!"

They travelled through the night. There had been snow, and there was a partial thaw, and they mostly travelled at a foot-pace, and always with many stoppages to breathe the splashed and floundering horses. After an hour's broad daylight, they drew rein at the inn-door at Neuchâtel, having been some eight-and-twenty hours in conquering some eighty English miles.

When they had hurriedly refreshed and changed, they went together to the house of business of Defresnier and Company. There they found the letter which the wine-carrier had described, enclosing the tests and comparisons of hand-writing essential to the discovery of the Forger. Vendale's determination to press forward, without resting, being already taken, the only question to delay them was by what Pass could they cross the Alps? Respecting the state of the two Passes of the

St. Gotthard and the Simplon, the guides and mule-drivers differed greatly; and both Passes were still far enough off, to prevent the travellers from having the benefit of any recent experience of either. Besides which, they well knew that a fall of snow might altogether change the described conditions in a single hour, even if they were correctly stated. But, on the whole, the Simplon appearing to be the hopefuller route, Vendale decided to take it. Obenreizer bore little or no part in the discussion, and scarcely spoke.

To Geneva, to Lausanne, along the level margin of the lake to Vevay, so into the winding valley between the spurs of the mountains, and into the valley of the Rhone. The sound of the carriage-wheels, as they rattled on, through the day, through the night, became as the wheels of a great clock, recording the hours. No change of weather varied the journey, after it had hardened into a sullen frost. In a sombre-yellow sky, they saw the Alpine ranges; and they saw enough of snow on nearer and much lower hill-tops and hill-sides, to sully, by contrast, the purity of lake, torrent, and waterfall, and make the villages look discoloured and dirty. But no snow fell, nor was there any snow-drift on the road. The stalking along the valley of more or less of white mist, changing on their hair and dress into icicles, was the only variety between them and the gloomy sky. And still by day, and still by night, the wheels. And still they rolled, in the hearing of one of them, to the burden, altered from the burden of the Rhine: "The time is gone for robbing him alive, and I must murder him."

They came, at length, to the poor little town of Brieg, at the foot of the Simplon. They came there after dark, but yet could see how dwarfed men's works and men became with the immense mountains towering over them. Here they must lie for the night; and here was warmth of fire, and lamp, and dinner, and wine, and after-conference resounding, with guides and drivers. No human creature had come across the Pass for four days. The snow above the snow-line was too soft for wheeled carriage, and not hard enough for sledge. There was snow in the sky. There had been snow in the sky for days past, and the marvel was that it had not fallen, and the certainty was that it must fall. No vehicle could cross. The journey might be tried on mules, or it might be tried on foot; but the best guides must be paid danger-price in either case, and that, too, whether they succeeded in taking the two travellers across, or turned for safety and brought them back.

In this discussion, Obenreizer bore no part whatever. He sat silently smoking by the fire until the room was cleared and Vendale referred to him.

"Bah! I am weary of these poor devils and their trade," he said, in reply. "Always the same story. It is the story of their trade to-day, as it was the story of their trade when I was a ragged boy. What do you and I want? We want a

knapsack each, and a mountain-staff each. We want no guide; we should guide him; he would not guide us. We leave our portmanteaus here, and we cross together. We have been on the mountains together before now, and I am mountain-born, and I know this Pass—Pass!—rather High Road!—by heart. We will leave these poor devils, in pity, to trade with others; but they must not delay us to make a pretence of earning money. Which is all they mean."

Vendale, glad to be quit of the dispute, and to cut the knot: active, adventurous, bent on getting forward, and therefore very susceptible to the last hint: readily assented. Within two hours, they had purchased what they wanted for the expedition, had packed their knapsacks, and lay down to sleep.

At break of day, they found half the town collected in the narrow street to see them depart. The people talked together in groups; the guides and drivers whispered apart, and looked up at the sky; no one wished them a good journey.

As they began the ascent, a gleam of sun shone from the otherwise unaltered sky, and for a moment turned the tin spires of the town to silver.

"A good omen!" said Vendale (though it died out while he spoke). "Perhaps our example will open the Pass on this side."

"No; we shall not be followed," returned Obenreizer, looking up at the sky and back at the valley. "We shall be alone up yonder."

ON THE MOUNTAIN.

The road was fair enough for stout walkers, and the air grew lighter and easier to breathe as the two ascended. But the settled gloom remained as it had remained for days back. Nature seemed to have come to a pause. The sense of hearing, no less than the sense of sight, was troubled by having to wait so long for the change, whatever it might be, that impended. The silence was as palpable and heavy as the lowering clouds—or rather cloud, for there seemed to be but one in all the sky, and that one covering the whole of it.

Although the light was thus dismally shrouded, the prospect was not obscured. Down in the valley of the Rhône behind them, the stream could be traced through all its many windings, oppressively sombre and solemn in its one leaden hue, a colourless waste. Far and high above them, glaciers and suspended avalanches overhung the spots where they must pass by-and-by; deep and dark below them on their right, were awful precipices and roaring torrent; tremendous mountains arose in every vista. The gigantic landscape, uncheered by a touch of changing light or a solitary ray of sun, was yet terribly distinct in its ferocity. The hearts of two lonely men might shrink a little, if they had to win their way for miles and hours among a legion of silent and motionless men—mere men like themselves—all looking at them with fixed and frowning front. But how much more, when the legion is of Nature's mightiest

works, and the frown may turn to fury in an instant!

As they ascended, the road became gradually more rugged and difficult. But the spirits of Vendale rose as they mounted higher, leaving so much more of the road behind them conquered. Obenreizer spoke little, and held on with a determined purpose. Both, in respect of agility and endurance, were well qualified for the expedition. Whatever the born mountaineer read in the weather-tokens, that was illegible to the other, he kept to himself.

"Shall we get across to-day?" asked Vendale.

"No," replied the other. "You see how much deeper the snow lies here than it lay half a league lower. The higher we mount, the deeper the snow will lie. Walking is half wading even now. And the days are so short! If we get as high as the fifth Refuge, and lie to-night at the Hospice, we shall do well."

"Is there no danger of the weather rising in the night," asked Vendale, anxiously, "and snowing us up?"

"There is danger enough about us," said Obenreizer, with a cautious glance onward and upward, "to render silence our best policy. You have heard of the Bridge of the Ganthier?"

"I have crossed it once."

"In the summer?"

"Yes; in the travelling season."

"Yes; but it is another thing at this season;" with a sneer, as though he were out of temper. "This is not a time of year, or a state of things, on an Alpine Pass, that you gentlemen holiday-travellers know much about."

"You are my Guide," said Vendale, good humouredly. "I trust to you."

"I am your Guide," said Obenreizer, "and I will guide you to your journey's end. There is the Bridge before us."

They had made a turn into a desolate and dismal ravine, where the snow lay deep below them, deep above them, deep on every side. While speaking, Obenreizer stood pointing at the Bridge, and observing Vendale's face, with a very singular expression on his own.

"If I, as Guide, had sent you over there, in advance, and encouraged you to give a shout or two, you might have brought down upon yourself tons and tons and tons of snow, that would not only have struck you dead, but buried you deep, at a blow."

"No doubt," said Vendale.

"No doubt. But that is not what I have to do, as Guide. So pass silently. Or, going as we go, our indiscretion might else crush and bury me. Let us get on!"

There was a great accumulation of snow on the Bridge; and such enormous accumulations of snow overhung them from projecting masses of rock, that they might have been making their way through a stormy sky of white clouds. Using his staff skillfully, sounding as he went, and looking upward, with bent shoulders, as it were to resist the mere idea of a fall from above, Obenreizer softly led. Vendale closely followed. They were yet in the midst of their dangerous way, when there came a mighty rush, followed

by a sound as of thunder. Obenreizer clapped his hand on Vendale's mouth and pointed to the track behind them. Its aspect had been wholly changed in a moment. An avalanche had swept over it, and plunged into the torrent at the bottom of the gulf below.

Their appearance at the solitary Inn not far beyond this terrible Bridge, elicited many expressions of astonishment from the people shut up in the house. "We stay but to rest," said Obenreizer, shaking the snow from his dress at the fire. "This gentleman has very pressing occasion to get across;—tell them, Vendale."

"Assuredly, I have very pressing occasion. I must cross."

"You hear, all of you. My friend has very pressing occasion to get across, and we want no advice and no help. I am as good a guide, my fellow-countrymen, as any of you. Now, give us to eat and drink."

In exactly the same way, and in nearly the same words, when it was coming on dark and they had struggled through the greatly increased difficulties of the road, and had at last reached their destination for the night, Obenreizer said to the astonished people of the Hospice, gathering about them at the fire, while they were yet in the act of getting their wet shoes off, and shaking the snow from their clothes:

"It is well to understand one another, friends all. This gentleman——"

"—Has," said Vendale, readily taking him up with a smile, "very pressing occasion to get across. Must cross."

"You hear?—has very pressing occasion to get across, must cross. We want no advice and no help. I am mountain-born, and act as Guide. Do not worry us by talking about it, but let us have supper, and wine, and bed."

All through the intense cold of the night, the same awful stillness. Again at sunrise, no sunny tinge to gild or redden the snow. The same interminable waste of deathly white; the same immovable air; the same monotonous gloom in the sky.

"Travellers!" a friendly voice called to them from the door, after they were afoot, knapsack on back and staff in hand, as yesterday: "recollect! There are five places of shelter, near together, on the dangerous road before you; and there is the wooden cross, and there is the next Hospice. Do not stray from the track. If the *Tourmente* comes on, take shelter instantly!"

"The trade of these poor devils!" said Obenreizer to his friend, with a contemptuous backward wave of his hand towards the voice. "How they stick to their trade! You Englishmen say we Swiss are mercenary. Truly, it does look like it."

They had divided between the two knapsacks, such refreshments as they had been able to obtain that morning, and as they deemed it prudent to take. Obenreizer carried the wine as his share of the burden; Vendale, the bread and meat and cheese, and the flask of brandy.

They had for some time laboured upward and onward through the snow—which was now above their knees in the track, and of unknown depth elsewhere—and they were still labouring upward and onward through the most frightful part of that tremendous desolation, when snow began to fall. At first, but a few flakes descended slowly and steadily. After a little while the fall grew much denser, and suddenly it began without apparent cause to whirl itself into spiral shapes. Instantly ensuing upon this last change, an icy blast came roaring at them, and every sound and force imprisoned until now was let loose.

One of the dismal galleries through which the road is carried at that perilous point, a cave eked out by arches of great strength, was near at hand. They struggled into it, and the storm raged wildly. The noise of the wind, the noise of the water, the thundering down of displaced masses of rock and snow, the awful voices with which not only that gorge but every gorge in the whole monstrous range seemed to be suddenly endowed, the darkness as of night, the violent revolving of the snow which beat and broke it into spray and blinded them, the madness of everything around insatiate for destruction, the rapid substitution of furious violence for unnatural calm, and hosts of appalling sounds for silence: these were things, on the edge of a deep abyss, to chill the blood, though the fierce wind, made actually solid by ice and snow, had failed to chill it.

Obenreizer, walking to and fro in the gallery without ceasing, signed to Vendale to help him unbuckle his knapsack. They could see each other, but could not have heard each other speak. Vendale complying, Obenreizer produced his bottle of wine, and poured some out, motioning Vendale to take that for warmth's sake, and not brandy. Vendale again complying, Obenreizer seemed to drink after him, and the two walked backwards and forwards side by side; both well knowing that to rest or sleep would be to die.

The snow came driving heavily into the gallery by the upper end at which they would pass out of it, if they ever passed out; for greater dangers lay on the road behind them than before. The snow soon began to choke the arch. An hour more, and it lay so high as to block out half of the returning daylight. But it froze hard now, as it fell, and could be clambered through or over. The violence of the mountain storm was gradually yielding to a steady snowfall. The wind still raged at intervals, but not incessantly; and when it paused, the snow fell in heavy flakes.

They might have been two hours in their frightful prison, when Obenreizer, now crunching into the mound, now creeping over it with his head bowed down and his body touching the top of the arch, made his way out. Vendale followed close upon him, but followed without clear motive or calculation. For the lethargy of Basle was creeping over him again, and mastering his senses.

How far he had followed out of the gallery, or

with what obstacles he had since contended, he knew not. He became roused to the knowledge that Obenreizer had set upon him, and that they were struggling desperately in the snow. He became roused to the remembrance of what his assailant carried in a girdle. He felt for it, drew it, struck at him, struggled again, struck at him again, cast him off, and stood face to face with him.

"I promised to guide you to your journey's end," said Obenreizer, "and I have kept my promise. The journey of your life ends here. Nothing can prolong it. You are sleeping as you stand."

"You are a villain. What have you done to me?"

"You are a fool. I have drugged you. You are doubly a fool, for I drugged you once before upon the journey, to try you. You are trebly a fool, for I am the thief and forger, and in a few moments I shall take those proofs against the thief and forger from your insensible body."

The entrapped man tried to throw off the lethargy, but its fatal hold upon him was so sure that, even while he heard those words, he stupidly wondered which of them had been wounded, and whose blood it was that he saw sprinkled on the snow.

"What have I done to you," he asked, heavily and thickly, "that you should be—so base—a murderer?"

"Done to me? You would have destroyed me, but that you have come to your journey's end. Your cursed activity interposed between me, and the time I had counted on in which I might have replaced the money. Done to me? You have come in my way—not once, not twice, but again and again and again. Did I try to shake you off in the beginning, or no? You were not to be shaken off. Therefore you die here."

Vendale tried to think coherently, tried to speak coherently, tried to pick up the iron-shod staff he had let fall; failing to touch it, tried to stagger on without its aid. All in vain, all in vain! He stumbled, and fell heavily forward on the brink of the deep chasm.

Stupefied, dozing, unable to stand upon his feet, a veil before his eyes, his sense of hearing deadened, he made such a vigorous rally that, supporting himself on his hands, he saw his enemy stand calmly over him, and heard him speak.

"You call me murderer," said Obenreizer, with a grim laugh. "The name matters very little. But at least I have set my life against yours, for I am surrounded by dangers, and may never make my way out of this place. The *Tourmente* is rising again. The snow is on the whirl. I must have the papers now. Every moment has my life in it."

"Stop!" cried Vendale, in a terrible voice, staggering up with a last flash of fire breaking out of him, and clutching the thievish hands at his breast, in both of his. "Stop! Stand away from me! God bless my Marguerite! Happily she will never know how I died. Stand off from me, and let me look at your murderous

face. Let it remind me—of something—left to say.”

The sight of him fighting so hard for his senses, and the doubt whether he might not for the instant be possessed by the strength of a dozen men, kept his opponent still. Wildly glaring at him, Vendale faltered out the broken words:

“It shall not be—the trust—of the dead—betrayed by me—reputed parents—misinherited fortune—see to it!”

As his head dropped on his breast, and he stumbled on the brink of the chasm as before, the thievish hands went once more, quick and busy, to his breast. He made a convulsive attempt to cry “No!” desperately rolled himself over into the gulf; and sank away from his enemy’s touch, like a phantom in a dreadful dream.

The mountain storm raged again, and passed again. The awful mountain-voices died away, the moon rose, and the soft and silent snow fell.

Two men and two large dogs came out at the door of the Hospice. The men looked carefully around them, and up at the sky. The dogs rolled in the snow, and took it into their mouths, and cast it up with their paws.

One of the men said to the other: “We may venture now. We may find them in one of the five Refuges.” Each fastened on his back, a basket; each took in his hand, a strong spiked pole; each girded under his arms, a looped end of a stout rope, so that they were tied together.

Suddenly the dogs desisted from their gambols in the snow, stood looking down the ascent, put their noses up, put their noses down, became greatly excited, and broke into a deep loud bay together.

The two men looked in the faces of the two dogs. The two dogs looked, with at least equal intelligence, in the faces of the two men.

“Au secours, then! Help! To the rescue!” cried the two men. The two dogs, with a glad, deep, generous bark, bounded away.

“Two more mad ones!” said the men, stricken motionless, and looking away into the moonlight. “Is it possible in such weather! And one of them a woman!”

Each of the dogs had the corner of a woman’s dress in its mouth, and drew her along. She fondled their heads as she came up, and she came up through the snow with an accustomed tread. Not so the large man with her, who was spent and winded.

“Dear guides, dear friends of travellers! I am of your country. We seek two gentlemen crossing the Pass, who should have reached the Hospice this evening.”

“They have reached it, ma’amselle.”

“Thank Heaven! O thank Heaven!”

“But, unhappily, they have gone on again. We are setting forth to seek them even now. We had to wait until the *Tourmente* passed. It has been fearful up here.”

“Dear guides, dear friends of travellers! Let me go with you. Let me go with you, for the love of God! One of those gentlemen is to be my husband. I love him, oh, so dearly. O so dearly! You see I am not faint, you see I am not tired. I am born a peasant girl. I will show you that I know well how to fasten myself to your ropes. I will do it with my own hands. I will swear to be brave and good. But let me go with you, let me go with you! If any mischance should have befallen him, my love would find him, when nothing else could. On my knees, dear friends of travellers! By the love your dear mothers had for your fathers!”

The good rough fellows were moved. “After all,” they murmured to one another, “she speaks but the truth. She knows the ways of the mountains. See how marvellously she has come here! But as to Monsieur there, ma’amselle?”

“Dear Mr. Joey,” said Marguerite, addressing him in his own tongue, “you will remain at the house, and wait for me; will you not?”

“If I know’d which o’ you two recommended it,” growled Joey Ladle, eyeing the two men with great indignation, “I’d fight you for sixpence, and give you half-a-crown towards your expenses. No, miss. I’ll stick by you as long as there’s any sticking left in me, and I’ll die for you when I can’t do better.”

The state of the moon rendering it highly important that no time should be lost, and the dogs showing signs of great uneasiness, the two men quickly took their resolution. The rope that yoked them together was exchanged for a longer one; the party were secured, Marguerite second, and the Cellarman last; and they set out for the Refuges. The actual distance of those places was nothing; the whole five and the next Hospice to boot, being within two miles; but the ghastly way was whitened out and sheeted over.

They made no miss in reaching the Gallery where the two had taken shelter. The second storm of wind and snow had so wildly swept over it since, that their tracks were gone. But the dogs went to and fro with their noses down, and were confident. The party stopping, however, at the further arch, where the second storm had been especially furious, and where the drift was deep, the dogs became troubled, and went about and about, in quest of a lost purpose.

The great abyss being known to lie on the right, they wandered too much to the left, and had to regain the way with infinite labour through a deep field of snow. The leader of the line had stopped it, and was taking note of the landmarks, when one of the dogs fell to tearing up the snow a little before them. Advancing and stooping to look at it, thinking that some one might be overwhelmed there, they saw that it was stained, and that the stain was red.

The other dog was now seen to look over the brink of the gulf, with his fore legs straightened out, lest he should fall into it, and to tremble in every limb. Then the dog who had found the stained snow joined him, and then they ran to

and fro, distressed and whining. Finally, they both stopped on the brink together, and setting up their heads, howled dolefully.

"There is some one lying below," said Marguerite.

"I think so," said the foremost man. "Stand well inward, the two last, and let us look over."

The last man kindled two torches from his basket, and handed them forward. The leader taking one, and Marguerite the other, they looked down: now shading the torches, now moving them to the right or left, now raising them, now depressing them, as moonlight far below contended with black shadows. A piercing cry from Marguerite broke a long silence.

"My God! On a projecting point, where a wall of ice stretches forward over the torrent, I see a human form!"

"Where, ma'amselle, where?"

"See, there! On the shelf of ice below the dogs!"

The leader, with a sickened aspect, drew inward, and they were all silent. But they were not all inactive, for Marguerite, with swift and skilful fingers, had detached both herself and him from the rope in a few seconds.

"Show me the baskets. These two are the only ropes?"

"The only ropes here, ma'amselle; but at the Hospice——"

"If he is alive—I know it is my lover—he will be dead before you can return. Dear Guides! Blessed friends of travellers! Look at me. Watch my hands. If they falter or go wrong, make me your prisoner by force. If they are steady and go right, help me to save him!"

She girded herself with a cord under the breast and arms, she formed it into a kind of jacket, she drew it into knots, she laid its end side by side with the end of the other cord, she twisted and twined the two together, she knotted them together, she set her foot upon the knots, she strained them, she held them for the two men to strain at.

"She is inspired," they said to one another.

"By the Almighty's mercy!" she exclaimed. "You both know that I am by far the lightest here. Give me the brandy and the wine, and lower me down to him. Then go for assistance and a stronger rope. You see that when it is lowered to me—look at this about me now—I can make it fast and safe to his body. Alive or dead, I will bring him up, or die with him. I love him passionately. Can I say more?"

They turned to her companion, but he was lying senseless on the snow.

"Lower me down to him," she said, taking two little kegs they had brought, and hanging them about her, "or I will dash myself to pieces! I am a peasant, and I know no giddiness or fear; and this is nothing to me, and I passionately love him. Lower me down!"

"Ma'amselle, ma'amselle, he must be dying or dead."

"Dying or dead, my husband's head shall lie upon my breast, or I will dash myself to pieces."

They yielded, overborne. With such precautions as their skill and the circumstances admitted, they let her slip from the summit, guiding herself down the precipitous icy wall with her hand, and they lowered down, and lowered down, and lowered down, until the cry came up: "Enough!"

"Is it really he, and is he dead?" they called down, looking over.

The cry came up: "He is insensible; but his heart beats. It beats against mine."

"How does he lie?"

The cry came up: "Upon a ledge of ice. It has thawed beneath him, and it will thaw beneath me. Hasten. If we die, I am content."

One of the two men hurried off with the dogs at such topmost speed as he could make; the other set up the lighted torches in the snow, and applied himself to recovering the Englishman. Much snow-chafing and some brandy got him on his legs, but delirious and quite unconscious where he was.

The watch remained upon the brink, and his cry went down continually: "Courage! They will soon be here. How goes it?" And the cry came up: "His heart still beats against mine. I warm him in my arms. I have cast off the rope, for the ice melts under us, and the rope would separate me from him; but I am not afraid."

The moon went down behind the mountain tops, and all the abyss lay in darkness. The cry went down: "How goes it?" The cry came up: "We are sinking lower, but his heart still beats against mine."

At length, the eager barking of the dogs, and a flare of light upon the snow, proclaimed that help was coming on. Twenty or thirty men, lamps, torches, litters, ropes, blankets, wood to kindle a great fire, restoratives and stimulants, came in fast. The dogs ran from one man to another, and from this thing to that, and ran to the edge of the abyss, dumbly entreating Speed, speed, speed!

The cry went down: "Thanks to God, all is ready. How goes it?"

The cry came up: "We are sinking still, and we are deadly cold. His heart no longer beats against mine. Let no one come down, to add to our weight. Lower the rope only."

The fire was kindled high, a great glare of torches lighted the sides of the precipice, lamps were lowered, a strong rope was lowered. She could be seen passing it round him, and making it secure.

The cry came up into a deathly silence: "Raise! Softly!" They could see her diminished figure shrink, as he was swung into the air.

They gave no shout when some of them laid him on a litter, and others lowered another strong rope. The cry again came up into a deathly silence: "Raise! Softly!" But when they caught her at the brink, then they shouted, then they wept, then they gave thanks to Heaven, then they kissed her feet, then they kissed her dress, then the dogs caressed her,

licked her icy hands, and with their honest faces warmed her frozen bosom!

She broke from them all, and sank over him on his litter, with both her loving hands upon the heart that stood still.

ACT IV.

THE CLOCK-LOCK.

The pleasant scene was Neuchâtel; the pleasant month was April; the pleasant place was a notary's office; the pleasant person in it was the notary: a rosy, hearty, handsome old man, chief notary of Neuchâtel, known far and wide in the canton as Maître Voigt. Professionally and personally, the notary was a popular citizen. His innumerable kindnesses and his innumerable oddities had for years made him one of the recognised public characters of the pleasant Swiss town. His long brown frock-coat and his black skull-cap were among the institutions of the place; and he carried a snuff-box which, in point of size, was popularly believed to be without a parallel in Europe.

There was another person in the notary's office, not so pleasant as the notary. This was Obenreizer.

An oddly pastoral kind of office it was, and one that would never have answered in England. It stood in a neat back yard, fenced off from a pretty flower-garden. Goats browsed in the doorway, and a cow was within half-a-dozen feet of keeping company with the clerk. Maître Voigt's room was a bright and varnished little room, with panelled walls, like a toy-chamber. According to the seasons of the year, roses, sunflowers, hollyhocks, peeped in at the windows. Maître Voigt's bees hummed through the office all the summer, in at this window and out at that, taking it frequently in their day's work, as if honey were to be made from Maître Voigt's sweet disposition. A large musical box on the chimney-piece, often trilled away at the Overture to Fra Diavolo, or a Selection from William Tell, with a chirruping liveliness that had to be stopped by force on the entrance of a client, and irrepressibly broke out again the moment his back was turned.

"Courage, courage, my good fellow!" said Maître Voigt, patting Obenreizer on the knee, in a fatherly and comforting way. "You will begin a new life to-morrow morning in my office here."

Obenreizer—dressed in mourning, and subdued in manner—lifted his hand, with a white handkerchief in it, to the region of his heart. "The gratitude is here," he said. "But the words to express it are not here."

"Ta-ta-ta! Don't talk to me about gratitude!" said Maître Voigt. "I hate to see a man oppressed. I see you oppressed, and I hold out my hand to you by instinct. Besides, I am not too old yet, to remember my young days. Your father sent me my first client. (It was on a question of half an acre of vineyard that seldom bore any grapes.) Do I owe nothing to your father's son? I owe him a debt of friendly obligation, and I pay it to you. That's

rather neatly expressed, I think," added Maître Voigt, in high good humour with himself. "Permit me to reward my own merit with a pinch of snuff!"

Obenreizer dropped his eyes to the ground, as though he were not even worthy to see the notary take snuff.

"Do me one last favour, sir," he said, when he raised his eyes. "Do not act on impulse. Thus far, you have only a general knowledge of my position. Hear the case for and against me, in its details, before you take me into your office. Let my claim on your benevolence be recognised by your sound reason as well as by your excellent heart. In that case, I may hold up my head against the bitterness of my enemies, and build myself a new reputation on the ruins of the character I have lost."

"As you will," said Maître Voigt. "You speak well, my son. You will be a fine lawyer one of these days."

"The details are not many," pursued Obenreizer. "My troubles begin with the accidental death of my late travelling companion, my lost dear friend, Mr. Vendale."

"Mr. Vendale," repeated the notary. "Just so. I have heard and read of the name, several times within these two months. The name of the unfortunate English gentleman who was killed on the Simplon. When you got that scar upon your cheek and neck."

"—From my own knife," said Obenreizer, touching what must have been an ugly gash at the time of its infliction.

"From your own knife," assented the notary, "and in trying to save him. Good, good, good. That was very good. Vendale. Yes. I have several times, lately, thought it droll that I should once have had a client of that name."

"But the world, sir," returned Obenreizer, "is so small!" Nevertheless he made a mental note that the notary had once had a client of that name.

"As I was saying, sir, the death of that dear travelling comrade begins my troubles. What follows? I save myself. I go down to Milan. I am received with coldness by Defresnier and Company. Shortly afterwards, I am discharged by Defresnier and Company. Why? They give no reason why. I ask, do they assail my honour? No answer. I ask, what is the imputation against me? No answer. I ask, where are their proofs against me? No answer. I ask, what am I to think? The reply is, 'M. Obenreizer is free to think what he will. What M. Obenreizer thinks, is of no importance to Defresnier and Company.' And that is all."

"Perfectly. That is all," assented the notary, taking a large pinch of snuff.

"But is that enough, sir?"

"That is not enough," said Maître Voigt. "The House of Defresnier are my fellow-townsmen—much respected, much esteemed—but the House of Defresnier must not silently destroy a man's character. You can rebut assertion. But how can you rebut silence?"

"Your sense of justice, my dear patron," answered Obenreizer, "states in a word the

cruelty of the case. Does it stop there? No. For, what follows upon that?"

"True, my poor boy," said the notary, with a comforting nod or two; "your ward rebels upon that."

"Rebels is too soft a word," retorted Obenreizer. "My ward revolts from me with horror. My ward defies me. My ward withdraws herself from my authority, and takes shelter (Madame Dor with her) in the house of that English lawyer, Mr. Bintrey, who replies to your summons to her to submit herself to my authority, that she will not do so."

"—And who afterwards writes," said the notary, moving his large snuff-box to look among the papers underneath it for the letter, "that he is coming to confer with me."

"Indeed?" replied Obenreizer, rather checked. "Well, sir. Have I no legal rights?"

"Assuredly, my poor boy," returned the notary. "All but felons have their legal rights."

"And who calls me felon?" said Obenreizer, fiercely.

"No one. Be calm under your wrongs. If the House of Defresnier would call you felon, indeed, we should know how to deal with them."

While saying these words, he had handed Bintrey's very short letter to Obenreizer, who now read it and gave it back.

"In saying," observed Obenreizer with recovered composure, "that he is coming to confer with you, this English lawyer means that he is coming to deny my authority over my ward."

"You think so?"

"I am sure of it. I know him. He is obstinate and contentious. You will tell me, my dear sir, whether my authority is unassailable, until my ward is of age?"

"Absolutely unassailable."

"I will enforce it. I will make her submit herself to it. For," said Obenreizer, changing his angry tone to one of grateful submission, "I owe it to you, sir; to you, who have so confidently taken an injured man under your protection, and into your employment."

"Make your mind easy," said Maître Voigt. "No more of this now, and no thanks! Be here to-morrow morning, before the other clerk comes—between seven and eight. You will find me in this room; and I will myself initiate you in your work. Go away! go away! I have letters to write. I won't hear a word more."

Dismissed with this generous abruptness, and satisfied with the favourable impression he had left on the old man's mind, Obenreizer was at leisure to revert to the mental note he had made that Maître Voigt once had a client whose name was Vendale.

"I ought to know England well enough by this time," so his meditations ran, as he sat on a bench in the yard; "and it is not a name I ever encountered there, except—" he looked involuntarily over his shoulder—"as *his* name. Is the world so small that I cannot get away from him, even now when he is dead? He confessed

at the last that he had betrayed the trust of the dead, and misinherited a fortune. And I was to see to it. And I was to stand off, that my face might remind him of it. Why *my* face, unless it concerned *me*? I am sure of his words, for they have been in my ears ever since. Can there be anything bearing on them, in the keeping of this old idiot? Anything to repair my fortunes, and blacken his memory? He dwelt upon my earliest remembrances, that night at Basle. Why, unless he had a purpose in it?"

Maître Voigt's two largest he-goats were butting at him to butt him out of the place, as if for that disrespectful mention of their master. So he got up and left the place. But he walked alone for a long time on the border of the lake, with his head drooped in deep thought.

Between seven and eight next morning, he presented himself again at the office. He found the notary ready for him, at work on some papers which had come in on the previous evening. In a few clear words, Maître Voigt explained the routine of the office, and the duties Obenreizer would be expected to perform. It still wanted five minutes to eight, when the preliminary instructions were declared to be complete.

"I will show you over the house and the offices," said Maître Voigt, "but I must put away these papers first. They come from the municipal authorities, and they must be taken special care of."

Obenreizer saw his chance, here, of finding out the repository in which his employer's private papers were kept.

"Can't I save you the trouble, sir?" he asked. "Can't I put those documents away under your directions?"

Maître Voigt laughed softly to himself; closed the portfolio in which the papers had been sent to him; handed it to Obenreizer.

"Suppose you try," he said. "All my papers of importance are kept yonder."

He pointed to a heavy oaken door, thickly studded with nails, at the lower end of the room. Approaching the door, with the portfolio, Obenreizer discovered, to his astonishment, that there were no means whatever of opening it from the outside. There was no handle, no bolt, no key, and (climax of passive obstruction!) no keyhole.

"There is a second door to this room?" said Obenreizer, appealing to the notary.

"No," said Maître Voigt. "Guess again."

"There is a window?"

"Nothing of the sort. The window has been bricked up. The only way in, is the way by that door. Do you give it up?" cried Maître Voigt, in high triumph. "Listen, my good fellow, and tell me if you hear nothing inside?"

Obenreizer listened for a moment, and started back from the door.

"I know!" he exclaimed. "I heard of this when I was apprenticed here at the watch-maker's. Perrin Brothers have finished their famous clock-lock at last—and you have got it?"

"Bravo!" said Maître Voigt. "The clock-lock it is! There, my son! There you have one

more of what the good people of this town call, 'Daddy Voigt's follies.' With all my heart! Let those laugh who win. No thief can steal *my* keys. No burglar can pick *my* lock. No power on earth, short of a battering-ram or a barrel of gunpowder, can move that door, till my little sentinel inside—my worthy friend who goes 'Tick, Tick,' as I tell him—says, 'Open!' The big door obeys the little Tick, Tick, and the little Tick, Tick, obeys *me*. That!" cried Daddy Voigt, snapping his fingers, "for all the thieves in Christendom!"

"May I see it in action?" asked Obenreizer. "Pardon my curiosity, dear sir! You know that I was once a tolerable worker in the clock trade."

"Certainly you shall see it in action," said Maître Voigt. "What is the time now? One minute to eight. Watch, and in one minute you will see the door open of itself."

In one minute, smoothly and slowly and silently, as if invisible hands had set it free, the heavy door opened inward, and disclosed a dark chamber beyond. On three sides, shelves filled the walls, from floor to ceiling. Arranged on the shelves, were rows upon rows of boxes made in the pretty inlaid woodwork of Switzerland, and bearing inscribed on their fronts (for the most part in fanciful coloured letters) the names of the notary's clients.

Maître Voigt lighted a taper, and led the way into the room.

"You shall see the clock," he said, proudly. "I possess the greatest curiosity in Europe. It is only a privileged few whose eyes can look at it. I give the privilege to your good father's son—you shall be one of the favoured few who enter the room with me. See! here it is, on the right-hand wall at the side of the door."

"An ordinary clock," exclaimed Obenreizer. "No! Not an ordinary clock. It has only one hand."

"Aha!" said Maître Voigt. "Not an ordinary clock, my friend. No, no. That one hand goes round the dial. As I put it, so it regulates the hour at which the door shall open. See! The hand points to eight. At eight the door opened, as you saw for yourself."

"Does it open more than once in the four-and-twenty hours?" asked Obenreizer.

"More than once?" repeated the notary, with great scorn. "You don't know, my good friend, Tick Tick! He will open the door as often as I ask him. All he wants, is his directions, and he gets them here. Look below the dial. Here is a half-circle of steel let into the wall, and here is a hand (called the regulator) that travels round it, just as *my* hand chooses. Notice, if you please, that there are figures to guide me on the half-circle of steel. Figure I. means: Open once in the four-and-twenty hours. Figure II. means: Open twice; and so on to the end. I set the regulator every morning, after I have read my letters, and when I know what my day's work is to be. Would you like to see me set it now? What is to-day? Wednesday. Good! This is the day of our rifle-club; there is little

business to do; I grant a half-holiday. No work here to-day, after three o'clock. Let us first put away this portfolio of municipal papers. There! No need to trouble Tick-Tick to open the door until eight to-morrow. Good! I leave the dial-hand at eight; I put back the regulator to 'I'; I close the door; and closed the door remains, past all opening by anybody, till to-morrow morning at eight."

Obenreizer's quickness instantly saw the means by which he might make the clock-lock betray its master's confidence, and place its master's papers at his disposal.

"Stop, sir!" he cried, at the moment when the notary was closing the door. "Don't I see something moving among the boxes—on the floor there?"

(Maître Voigt turned his back for a moment to look. In that moment, Obenreizer's ready hand put the regulator on, from the figure 'I' to the figure 'II.' Unless the notary looked again at the half-circle of steel, the door would open at eight that evening, as well as at eight next morning, and nobody but Obenreizer would know it.)

"There is nothing!" said Maître Voigt. "Your troubles have shaken your nerves, my son. Some shadow thrown by my taper; or some poor little beetle, who lives among the old lawyer's secrets, running away from the light. Hark! I hear your fellow-clerk in the office. To work! to work! and build to-day the first step that leads to your new fortunes!"

He good humouredly pushed Obenreizer out before him; extinguished the taper, with a last fond glance at his clock which passed harmlessly over the regulator beneath; and closed the oaken door.

At three, the office was shut up. The notary and everybody in the notary's employment, with one exception, went to see the rifle-shooting. Obenreizer had pleaded that he was not in spirits for a public festival. Nobody knew what had become of him. It was believed that he had slipped away for a solitary walk.

The house and offices had been closed but a few minutes, when the door of a shining wardrobe, in the notary's shining room, opened, and Obenreizer stepped out. He walked to a window, unclosed the shutters, satisfied himself that he could escape unseen by way of the garden, turned back into the room, and took his place in the notary's easy chair. He was locked up in the house, and there were five hours to wait before eight o'clock came.

He wore his way through the five hours: some times reading the books and newspapers that lay on the table: sometimes thinking: sometimes walking to and fro. Sunset came on. He closed the window-shutters before he kindled a light. The candle lighted, and the time drawing nearer and nearer, he sat, watch in hand, with his eyes on the oaken door.

At eight, smoothly and softly and silently the door opened.

One after another, he read the names on the outer rows of boxes. No such name as Vendale! He removed the outer row,

and looked at the row behind. These were older boxes, and shabbier boxes. The four first that he examined, were inscribed with French and German names. The fifth bore a name which was almost illegible. He brought it out into the room, and examined it closely. There, covered thickly with time-stains and dust, was the name: "Vendale."

The key hung to the box by a string. He unlocked the box, took out four loose papers that were in it, spread them open on the table, and began to read them. He had not so occupied a minute, when his face fell from its expression of eagerness and avidity, to one of haggard astonishment and disappointment. But, after a little consideration, he copied the papers. He then replaced the papers, replaced the box, closed the door, extinguished the candle, and stole away.

As his murderous and thievish footfall passed out of the garden, the steps of the notary and some one accompanying him stopped at the front door of the house. The lamps were lighted in the little street, and the notary had his door-key in his hand.

"Pray do not pass my house, Mr. Bintrey," he said. "Do me the honour to come in. It is one of our town half-holidays—our Tir—but my people will be back directly. It is droll that you should ask your way to the Hotel of me. Let us eat and drink before you go there."

"Thank you; not to-night," said Bintrey. "Shall I come to you at ten to-morrow?"

"I shall be enchanted, sir, to take so early an opportunity of redressing the wrongs of my injured client," returned the good notary.

"Yes," retorted Bintrey; "your injured client is all very well—but—a word in your ear."

He whispered to the notary, and walked off. When the notary's housekeeper came home, she found him standing at his door motionless, with the key still in his hand, and the door unopened.

OBERREIZER'S VICTORY.

The scene shifts again—to the foot of the Simplon, on the Swiss side.

In one of the dreary rooms of the dreary little inn at Brieg, Mr. Bintrey and Maître Voigt sat together at a professional council of two. Mr. Bintrey was searching in his despatch-box. Maître Voigt was looking towards a closed door, painted brown to imitate mahogany, and communicating with an inner room.

"Isn't it time he was here?" asked the notary, shifting his position, and glancing at a second door at the other end of the room, painted yellow to imitate deal.

"He is here," answered Bintrey, after listening for a moment.

The yellow door was opened by a waiter, and Oberreizer walked in.

After greeting Maître Voigt with a cordiality which appeared to cause the notary no little embarrassment, Oberreizer bowed with grave and distant politeness to Bintrey. "For what

reason have I been brought from Neuchâtel to the foot of the mountain?" he inquired, taking the seat which the English lawyer had indicated to him.

"You shall be quite satisfied on that head before our interview is over," returned Bintrey. "For the present, permit me to suggest proceeding at once to business. There has been a correspondence, Mr. Oberreizer, between you and your niece. I am here to represent your niece."

"In other words, you, a lawyer, are here to represent an infraction of the law."

"Admirably put!" said Bintrey. "If all the people I have to deal with were only like you, what an easy profession mine would be! I am here to represent an infraction of the law—that is your point of view. I am here to make a compromise between you and your niece—that is my point of view."

"There must be two parties to a compromise," rejoined Oberreizer. "I decline, in this case, to be one of them. The law gives me authority to control my niece's actions, until she comes of age. She is not yet of age; and I claim my authority."

At this point Maître Voigt attempted to speak. Bintrey silenced him with a compassionate indulgence of tone and manner, as if he was silencing a favourite child.

"No, my worthy friend, not a word. Don't excite yourself unnecessarily; leave it to me." He turned, and addressed himself again to Oberreizer. "I can think of nothing comparable to you, Mr. Oberreizer, but granite—and even that wears out in course of time. In the interests of peace and quietness—for the sake of your own dignity—relax a little. If you will only delegate your authority to another person whom I know of, that person may be trusted never to lose sight of your niece, night or day!"

"You are wasting your time and mine," returned Oberreizer. "If my niece is not rendered up to my authority within one week from this day, I invoke the law. If you resist the law, I take her by force."

He rose to his feet as he said the last word. Maître Voigt looked round again towards the brown door which led into the inner room.

"Have some pity on the poor girl," pleaded Bintrey. "Remember how lately she lost her lover by a dreadful death! Will nothing move you?"

"Nothing."

Bintrey, in his turn, rose to his feet, and looked at Maître Voigt. Maître Voigt's hand, resting on the table, began to tremble. Maître Voigt's eyes remained fixed, as if by irresistible fascination, on the brown door. Oberreizer, suspiciously observing him, looked that way too.

"There is somebody listening in there!" he exclaimed, with a sharp backward glance at Bintrey.

"There are two people listening," answered Bintrey.

"Who are they?"

"You shall see."

With that answer, he raised his voice and spoke the next words—the two common words which are on everybody's lips, at every hour of the day: "Come in!"

The brown door opened. Supported on Marguerite's arm—his sunburnt colour gone, his right arm bandaged and slung over his breast—Vendale stood before the murderer, a man risen from the dead.

In the moment of silence that followed, the singing of a caged bird in the courtyard outside was the one sound stirring in the room. Maître Voigt touched Bintrey, and pointed to Obenreizer. "Look at him!" said the notary, in a whisper.

The shock had paralysed every movement in the villain's body, but the movement of the blood. His face was like the face of a corpse. The one vestige of colour left in it was a livid purple streak which marked the course of the scar, where his victim had wounded him on the cheek and neck. Speechless, breathless, motionless alike in eye and limb, it seemed as if, at the sight of Vendale, the death to which he had doomed Vendale had struck him where he stood.

"Somebody ought to speak to him," said Maître Voigt. "Shall I?"

Even at that moment, Bintrey persisted in silencing the notary, and in keeping the lead in the proceedings to himself. Checking Maître Voigt by a gesture, he dismissed Marguerite and Vendale in these words:—"The object of your appearance here is answered," he said. "If you will withdraw for the present, it may help Mr. Obenreizer to recover himself."

It did help him. As the two passed through the door, and closed it behind them, he drew a deep breath of relief. He looked round him for the chair from which he had risen, and dropped into it.

"Give him time!" pleaded Maître Voigt.

"No," said Bintrey. "I don't know what use he may make of it, if I do." He turned once more to Obenreizer, and went on. "I owe it to myself," he said—"I don't admit, mind, that I owe it to *you*—to account for my appearance in these proceedings, and to state what has been done under my advice, and on my sole responsibility. Can you listen to me?"

"I can listen to you."

"Recal the time when you started for Switzerland with Mr. Vendale," Bintrey began. "You had not left England four-and-twenty hours, before your niece committed an act of imprudence which not even your penetration could foresee. She followed her promised husband on his journey, without asking anybody's advice or permission, and without any better companion to protect her than a Cellarman in Mr. Vendale's employment."

"Why did she follow me on the journey? and how came the Cellarman to be the person who accompanied her?"

"She followed you on the journey," answered

Bintrey, "because she suspected there had been some serious collision between you and Mr. Vendale, which had been kept secret from her; and because she rightly believed you to be capable of serving your interests, or of satisfying your enmity, at the price of a crime. As for the Cellarman, he was one, among the other people in Mr. Vendale's establishment, to whom she had applied (the moment your back was turned) to know if anything had happened between their master and you. The Cellarman alone had something to tell her. A senseless superstition, and a common accident which had happened to his master, in his master's cellar, had connected Mr. Vendale in this man's mind with the idea of danger by murder. Your niece surprised him into a confession, which aggravated tenfold the terrors that possessed her. Aroused to a sense of the mischief he had done, the man, of his own accord, made the one atonement in his power. 'If my master is in danger, miss,' he said, 'it's my duty to follow him, too; and it's more than my duty to take care of *you*.' The two set forth together—and, for once, a superstition has had its use. It decided your niece on taking the journey; and it led the way to saving a man's life. Do you understand me, so far?"

"I understand you, so far."

"My first knowledge of the crime that you had committed," pursued Bintrey, "came to me in the form of a letter from your niece. All you need know is that her love and her courage recovered the body of your victim, and aided the after-efforts which brought him back to life. While he lay helpless at Brieg, under her care, she wrote to me to come out to him. Before starting, I informed Madame Dor that I knew Miss Obenreizer to be safe, and knew where she was. Madame Dor informed me, in return, that a letter had come for your niece, which she knew to be in your handwriting. I took possession of it, and arranged for the forwarding of any other letters which might follow. Arrived at Brieg, I found Mr. Vendale out of danger, and at once devoted myself to hastening the day of reckoning with you. Defresnier and Company turned you off on suspicion; acting on information privately supplied by me. Having stripped you of your false character, the next thing to do was to strip you of your authority over your niece. To reach this end, I not only had no scruple in digging the pitfall under your feet in the dark—I felt a certain professional pleasure in fighting you with your own weapons. By my advice, the truth has been carefully concealed from you, up to this day. By my advice, the trap into which you have walked was set for you (you know why, now, as well as I do) in this place. There was but one certain way of shaking the devilish self-control which has hitherto made you a formidable man. That way has been tried, and (look at me as you may) that way has succeeded. The last thing that remains to be done," concluded Bintrey, producing two little slips of manuscript from his despatch-box, "is to set your niece free. You

have attempted murder, and you have committed forgery and theft. We have the evidence ready against you in both cases. If you are convicted as a felon, you know as well as I do what becomes of your authority over your niece. Personally, I should have preferred taking that way out of it. But considerations are pressed on me which I am not able to resist, and this interview must end, as I have told you already, in a compromise. Sign those lines, resigning all authority over Miss Obenreizer, and pledging yourself never to be seen in England or in Switzerland again; and I will sign an indemnity which secures you against further proceedings on our part."

Obenreizer took the pen, in silence, and signed his niece's release. On receiving the indemnity in return, he rose, but made no movement to leave the room. He stood looking at Maître Voigt with a strange smile gathering at his lips, and a strange light flashing in his filmy eyes.

"What are you waiting for?" asked Bintrey.

Obenreizer pointed to the brown door. "Call them back," he answered. "I have something to say in their presence before I go."

"Say it in my presence," retorted Bintrey. "I decline to call them back."

Obenreizer turned to Maître Voigt. "Do you remember telling me that you once had an English client named Vendale?" he asked.

"Well," answered the notary. "And what of that?"

"Maître Voigt, your clock-lock has betrayed you."

"What do you mean?"

"I have read the letters and certificates in your client's box. I have taken copies of them. I have got the copies here. Is there, or is there not, a reason for calling them back?"

For a moment the notary looked to and fro, between Obenreizer and Bintrey, in helpless astonishment. Recovering himself, he drew his brother-lawyer aside, and hurriedly spoke a few words close at his ear. The face of Bintrey—after first faithfully reflecting the astonishment on the face of Maître Voigt—suddenly altered its expression. He sprang, with the activity of a young man, to the door of the inner room, entered it, remained inside for a minute, and returned followed by Marguerite and Vendale. "Now, Mr. Obenreizer," said Bintrey, "the last move in the game is yours. Play it."

"Before I resign my position as that young lady's guardian," said Obenreizer, "I have a secret to reveal in which she is interested. In making my disclosure, I am not claiming her attention for a narrative which she, or any other person present, is expected to take on trust. I am possessed of written proofs, copies of originals, the authenticity of which Maître Voigt himself can attest. Bear that in mind, and permit me to refer you, at starting, to a date long past—the month of February, in the year one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six."

"Mark the date, Mr. Vendale," said Bintrey.

"My first proof," said Obenreizer, taking a paper from his pocket-book. "Copy of a letter, written by an English lady (married) to her sister, a widow. The name of the person writing the letter I shall keep suppressed until I have done. The name of the person to whom the letter is written I am willing to reveal. It is addressed to 'Mrs. Jane Ann Miller, of Groombridge-wells, England.'"

Vendale started, and opened his lips to speak. Bintrey instantly stopped him, as he had stopped Maître Voigt. "No," said the pertinacious lawyer. "Leave it to me."

Obenreizer went on:

"It is needless to trouble you with the first half of the letter," he said. "I can give the substance of it in two words. The writer's position at the time is this. She has been long living in Switzerland with her husband—obliged to live there for the sake of her husband's health. They are about to move to a new residence on the Lake of Neuchâtel in a week, and they will be ready to receive Mrs. Miller as visitor in a fortnight from that time. This said, the writer next enters into an important domestic detail. She has been childless for years—she and her husband have now no hope of children; they are lonely; they want an interest in life; they have decided on adopting a child. Here the important part of the letter begins; and here, therefore, I read it to you word for word."

He folded back the first page of the letter and read as follows:

"* * * Will you help us, my dear sister, to realise our new project? As English people, we wish to adopt an English child. This may be done, I believe, at the Foundling; my husband's lawyers in London will tell you how. I leave the choice to you, with only these conditions attached to it—that the child is to be an infant under a year old, and is to be a boy. Will you pardon the trouble I am giving you, for my sake; and will you bring our adopted child to us, with your own children, when you come to Neuchâtel?"

"I must add a word as to my husband's wishes in this matter. He is resolved to spare the child whom we make our own, any future mortification and loss of self-respect which might be caused by a discovery of his true origin. He will bear my husband's name, and he will be brought up in the belief that he is really our son. His inheritance of what we have to leave will be secured to him—not only according to the laws of England in such cases, but according to the laws of Switzerland also; for we have lived so long in this country, that there is a doubt whether we may not be considered as 'domiciled' in Switzerland. The one precaution left to take is to prevent any after-discovery at the Foundling. Now, our name is a very uncommon one; and if we appear on the Register of the Institution, as the persons adopting the child, there is just a chance that something might result from it. Your name, my dear, is the name of thousands of other people; and if you will consent to appear on the Register, there need be no fear of any discoveries in that quarter. We are moving, by the doctor's orders, to a part of Switzerland in which our circumstances

are quite unknown; and you, as I understand, are about to engage a new nurse for the journey when you come to see us. Under these circumstances, the child may appear as my child, brought back to me under my sister's care. The only servant we take with us from our old home is my own maid, who can be safely trusted. As for the lawyers in England and in Switzerland, it is their profession to keep secrets—and we may feel quite easy in that direction. So there you have our harmless little conspiracy! Write by return of post, my love, and tell me you will join it.” * * *

“Do you still conceal the name of the writer of that letter?” asked Vendale.

“I keep the name of the writer till the last,” answered Obenreizer, “and I proceed to my second proof—a mere slip of paper, this time, as you see. Memorandum given to the Swiss lawyer, who drew the documents referred to in the letter I have just read, expressed as follows:—‘Adopted from the Foundling Hospital of England, 3rd March, 1836, a male infant, called, in the Institution, Walter Wilding. Person appearing on the register, as adopting the child, Mrs. Jane Anne Miller, widow, acting in this matter for her married sister, domiciled in Switzerland.’ Patience!” resumed Obenreizer, as Vendale, breaking loose from Bintrey, started to his feet. “I shall not keep the name concealed much longer. Two more little slips of paper, and I have done. Third proof! Certificate of Doctor Ganz, still living in practice at Neuchâtel, dated July, 1838. The doctor certifies (you shall read it for yourselves directly), first, that he attended the adopted child in its infant maladies; second, that, three months before the date of the certificate, the gentleman adopting the child as his son died; third, that on the date of the certificate, his widow and her maid, taking the adopted child with them, left Neuchâtel on their return to England. One more link now added to this, and my chain of evidence is complete. The maid remained with her mistress till her mistress's death, only a few years since. The maid can swear to the identity of the adopted infant, from his childhood to his youth—from his youth to his manhood, as he is now. There is her address in England—and there, Mr. Vendale, is the fourth, and final proof!”

“Why do you address yourself to me?” said Vendale, as Obenreizer threw the written address on the table.

Obenreizer turned on him, in a sudden frenzy of triumph.

“Because you are the man! If my niece marries you, she marries a bastard, brought up by public charity. If my niece marries you, she marries an impostor, without name or lineage, disguised in the character of a gentleman of rank and family.”

“Bravo!” cried Bintrey. “Admirably put, Mr. Obenreizer! It only wants one word more to complete it. She marries—thanks entirely to your exertions—a man who inherits a handsome fortune, and a man whose origin will make him prouder than ever of his peasant-wife. George Vendale, as brother-executors, let us congratu-

late each other! Our dear dead friend's last wish on earth is accomplished. We have found the lost Walter Wilding. As Mr. Obenreizer said just now—you are the man!”

The words passed by Vendale unheeded. For the moment he was conscious of but one sensation; he heard but one voice. Marguerite's hand was clasping his. Marguerite's voice was whispering to him: “I never loved you, George, as I love you now!”

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

May-Day. There is merry-making in Cripple Corner, the chimneys smoke, the patriarchal dining-hall is hung with garlands, and Mrs. Goldstraw, the respected housekeeper, is very busy. For, on this bright morning the young master of Cripple Corner is married to its young mistress, far away: to wit, in the little town of Brieg, in Switzerland, lying at the foot of the Simplon Pass where she saved his life.

The bells ring gaily in the little town of Brieg, and flags are stretched across the street, and rifle shots are heard, and sounding music from brass instruments. Streamer-decorated casks of wine have been rolled out under a gay awning in the public way before the Inn, and there will be free feasting and revelry. What with bells and banners, draperies hanging from windows, explosion of gunpowder, and reverberation of brass music, the little town of Brieg is all in a flutter, like the hearts of its simple people.

It was a stormy night last night, and the mountains are covered with snow. But the sun is bright to-day, the sweet air is fresh, the tin spires of the little town of Brieg are burnished silver, and the Alps are ranges of far-off white cloud in a deep blue sky.

The primitive people of the little town of Brieg have built a greenwood arch across the street, under which the newly married pair shall pass in triumph from the church. It is inscribed, on that side, “HONOUR AND LOVE TO MARGUERITE VENDALE!” for the people are proud of her to enthusiasm. This greeting of the bride under her new name is affectionately meant as a surprise, and therefore the arrangement has been made that she, unconscious why, shall be taken to the Church by a tortuous back way. A scheme not difficult to carry into execution in the crooked little town of Brieg.

So, all things are in readiness, and they are to go and come on foot. Assembled in the Inn's best chamber, festively adorned, are the bride and bridegroom, the Neuchâtel notary, the London lawyer, Madame Dor, and a certain large mysterious Englishman, popularly known as Monsieur Zhœ-Ladelle. And behold Madame Dor, arrayed in a spotless pair of gloves of her own, with no hand in the air, but both hands clasped round the neck of the bride; to embrace whom Madame Dor has turned her broad back on the company, consistent to the last.

“Forgive me, my beautiful,” pleads Madame Dor, “for that I ever was his she-cat!”

"She-cat, Madame Dor?"

"Engaged to sit watching my so charming mouse," are the explanatory words of Madame Dor, delivered with a penitential sob.

"Why, you were our best friend! George, dearest, tell Madame Dor. Was she not our best friend?"

"Undoubtedly, darling. What should we have done without her?"

"You are both so generous," cries Madame Dor, accepting consolation, and immediately relapsing. "But I commenced as a she-cat."

"Ah! But like the cat in the fairy-story, good Madame Dor," says Vendale, saluting her cheek, "you were a true woman. And, being a true woman, the sympathy of your heart was with true love."

"I don't wish to deprive Madame Dor of her share in the embraces that are going on," Mr. Bintrey puts in, watch in hand, "and I don't presume to offer any objection to your having got yourselves mixed together, in the corner there, like the three Graces. I merely remark that I think it's time we were moving. What are *your* sentiments on that subject, Mr. Ladle?"

"Clear, sir," replies Joey, with a gracious grin. "I'm clearer altogether, sir, for having lived so many weeks upon the surface. I never was half so long upon the surface afore, and it's done me a power of good. At Cripple Corner, I was too much below it. Atop of the Simpleton, I was a deal too high above it. I've found the medium here, sir. And if ever I take it in convivial, in all the rest of my days, I mean to do it this day, to the toast of 'Bless 'em both.'"

"I, too!" says Bintrey. "And now, Monsieur Voigt, let you and me be two men of Marseilles, and allons, marchons, arm-in-arm!"

They go down to the door, where others are waiting for them, and they go quietly to the church, and the happy marriage takes place. While the ceremony is yet in progress, the notary is called out. When it is finished, he has returned, is standing behind Vendale, and touches him on the shoulder.

"Go to the side door, one moment, Monsieur Vendale. Alone. Leave Madame to me."

At the side door of the church, are the same two men from the Hospice. They are snow-stained and travel-worn. They wish him joy, and then each lays his broad hand upon Vendale's breast, and one says in a low voice, while the other steadfastly regards him:

"It is here, Monsieur. Your litter. The very same."

"My litter is here? Why?"

"Hush! For the sake of Madame. Your companion of that day——"

"What of him?"

The man looks at his comrade, and his comrade takes him up. Each keeps his hand laid earnestly on Vendale's breast.

"He had been living at the first Refuge, monsieur, for some days. The weather was now good, now bad."

"Yes?"

"He arrived at our Hospice the day before yesterday, and, having refreshed himself with sleep on the floor before the fire, wrapped in his cloak, was resolute to go on, before dark, to the next Hospice. He had a great fear of that part of the way, and thought it would be worse to-morrow."

"Yes?"

"He went on alone. He had passed the gallery, when an avalanche—like that which fell behind you near the Bridge of the Ganthier——"

"Killed him?"

"We dug him out, suffocated and broken all to pieces! But, monsieur, as to Madame. We have brought him here on the litter, to be buried. We must ascend the street outside. Madame must not see. It would be an accursed thing to bring the litter through the arch across the street, until Madame has passed through. As you descend, we who accompany the litter will set it down on the stones of the street the second to the right, and will stand before it. But do not let Madame turn her head towards the street the second to the right. There is no time to lose. Madame will be alarmed by your absence. Adieu!"

Vendale returns to his bride, and draws her hand through his unmaimed arm. A pretty procession awaits them at the main door of the church. They take their station in it, and descend the street amidst the ringing of the bells, the firing of the guns, the waving of the flags, the playing of the music, the shouts, the smiles, and tears, of the excited town. Heads are uncovered as she passes, hands are kissed to her, all the people bless her. "Heaven's benediction on the dear girl! See where she goes in her youth and beauty; she who so nobly saved his life!"

Near the corner of the street the second to the right, he speaks to her, and calls her attention to the windows on the opposite side. The corner well passed, he says: "Do not look round, my darling, for a reason that I have," and turns his head. Then, looking back along the street, he sees the litter and its bearers passing up alone under the arch, as he and she and their marriage train go down towards the shining valley.

THE END OF THE CHRISTMAS NUMBER FOR 1867.

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